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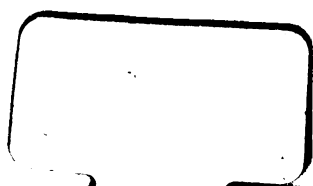
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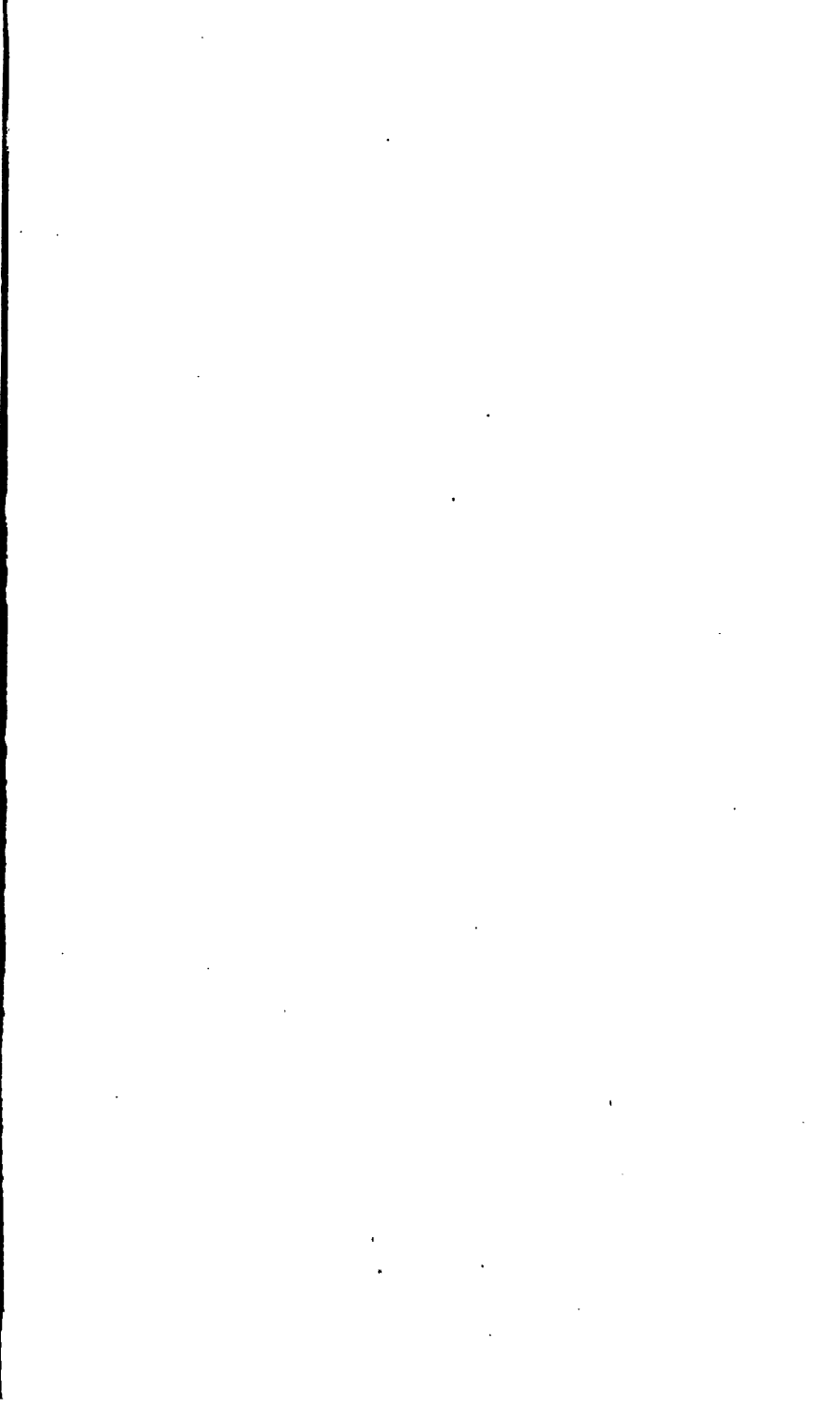
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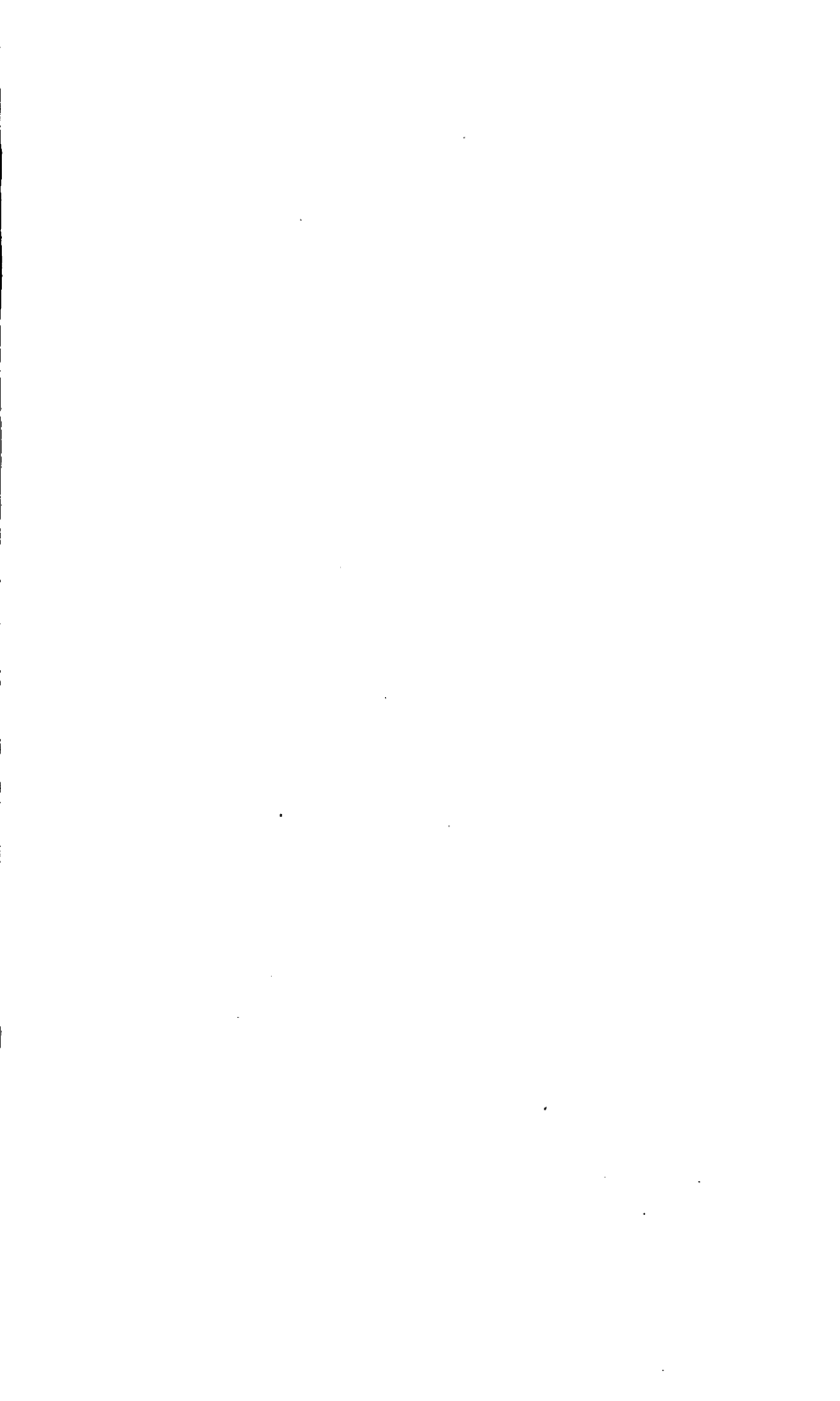


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A
COMPENDIUM
OF THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND,
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD
TO THE
REIGN OF GEORGE I.

BY
JOHN LAWLESS, Esq.
PROPRIETOR AND EDITOR OF THE IRISHMAN,
PUBLISHED IN BELFAST.

*Historia est temporum testis, lux veritatis, magistra vitæ, vita memoriæ,
et nuncia antiquitatis.—CICERO.*

*History is the witness of times past, the light of truth, the mistress of
life, the life of memory, and the herald of antiquity.*

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TO

THE IRISH PEOPLE.

THE BOOK, which I now have the honour to present to my countrymen, has been written in the hope that it will contribute, in some degree, to the promotion of that liberal, enlightened and benevolent feeling, which has been making such rapid strides for the last thirty years of our history. If the author has been guilty of any exaggeration in description, or in commentary (which he has industriously struggled to avoid), let the Irishman reflect that his errors are on the side of the honour of his country ; that his feelings, if too warm, are heated by an anxious desire to vindicate the insulted character of a people who have been eternally the victims of calumny, the prey to every speculator on their fame and their glory, the devoted sa-

crifice to insatiable avarice, to dishonourable ambition, and a sanguinary foreign ascendancy.

It is hoped that the reader of every class and description, of every persuasion, and sect of Christianity, will observe through the pages of this volume of Irish history, that the leading object of its author was the inculcation of that grand and paramount principle of Christianity, which imperatively tells us to respect the religious feelings of every human being—to practise that toleration which each sect is perpetually demanding, and leave to God and to his creature the settlement of those points which are beyond all human control, and should ever command the veneration of the wise, the liberal, and the enlightened.

That the partizan of faction, or the partizan of the people—that the advocate of intolerance, as well as the advocate of equal and impartial privilege, will find much to censure, and perhaps little to praise, must be expected by him who pleads the cause of truth with firmness and impartiality.

The author has endeavoured to refute the libeller of Ireland, with temperance and deco-

rum. The composer of an abridgment of Irish history can lay but little claim to the merit of invention : his duty is to select with industry and with judgment ; to compare his authorities with caution, anxiety, and impartiality ; and to put into as small a space as possible the grand and leading features of his history. To such claims, the author will flatter himself he may, without the hazard of contradiction, put in his humble pretensions. If, on closing this volume, the heart of the reader shall sympathise with the sufferings of Ireland—if he be inclined to shed a single tear over the graves of those illustrious dead who combated, though unsuccessfully, for the liberty, the religion, and the fame of their country—if he be disposed to acknowledge that no country under heaven ever suffered so much from the crimes and the follies of its rulers, the author will congratulate Ireland on the effects of his labours, and will thankfully acknowledge his ample remuneration in the benefits which must flow to his countrymen from the dissemination of such feelings.



PREFACE.

IT is universally admitted by every friend to the religion, the liberties, and the welfare of Ireland, that nothing can contribute so much to their promotion, as the dissemination of that historical knowledge which informs the Irish people *what their country has been—what it now is—and by what means its future prosperity may be retarded or advanced.* The Irishman who is ignorant of the history of his country, can but little contribute to the councils of men whose opinions are regulated by the wisdom of their ancestors, and whose errors are corrected by the *accurate* knowledge of the mistakes of those who have gone before them. He who is a stranger to the history of Ireland, can draw no resources from the laborious lucubrations of talent, or the brilliant discoveries of genius, to which his country has given birth, and which time has swept into the grave. Such a man can receive no supplies from the treasury of antiquity. Centuries have rolled by, without advantage to him against whom the book of history has been closed: the author and his productions sink into the same tomb, unobserved and unthought of. For him the ancient magnificence of Ireland is in vain established by the successful researches of the antiquarian; and the wisdom of former ages lies mouldering in records, which perhaps he has had no opportunity of examining.

The principal object of the present work, is to give universal circulation to the leading and remarkable features of Irish history ;—to give those features with veracity—with conciseness—and at such a price as may render them accessible to the poor, though independent Irishman,

The early period of Irish history may perhaps be considered more interesting to the curious antiquarian than to the practical politician. The records of Keating, however flattering to the pride of an Irishman, will be found but little calculated to add to that stock of useful information, which our modern history so abundantly affords. The memory of his reader is oppressed by the labour of recollection ; and the efforts of the historian to establish the authenticity of Irish fame, and the superior claim of Irish genealogy, too frequently entangle the understanding of the reader in unprofitable researches, visionary inquiries, and idle conjectures. The present compendium takes a rapid view of those days of greatness, of which the Irish bards have sung with rapturous enthusiasm: it then passes to the second Henry of England, and carries the records of the principal and most leading events down to the reign of George the First. This task, it is hoped, will be found to be performed with proper anxiety for the interest of truth, as well as the honour and welfare of our country.

The writer of this volume has another object in view, and he hopes, one which will find shelter in every Irish bosom—namely, to excite an honest and an ardent feeling among his countrymen, for the recorded sufferings of Ireland, and to teach, from the experience of the past, the most certain and judicious mode of guarding against the calamities of the future. To accomplish these views in one volume at once compendious and satisfactory, will be admitted by the candid and ingenuous reader, to be a task of difficulty and hazard.

To relate the afflicting and melancholy events which crowd the history of Ireland, without incurring the charge of prejudice, or the suspicions of party, will perhaps be impossible. Such suspicions, however, do not discourage the attempt to give a brief narrative of our history, with truth, and with impartiality; with an anxiety to please all parties, but with a determination to sacrifice the cause of justice to none.

It is hoped that the reader of this cheap and compendious volume, will find that the first and last feeling which influenced the pen of him who wrote it, was a sincere and zealous anxiety for the establishment of political and religious freedom among Irishmen of every persuasion.

January 1st, 1814.

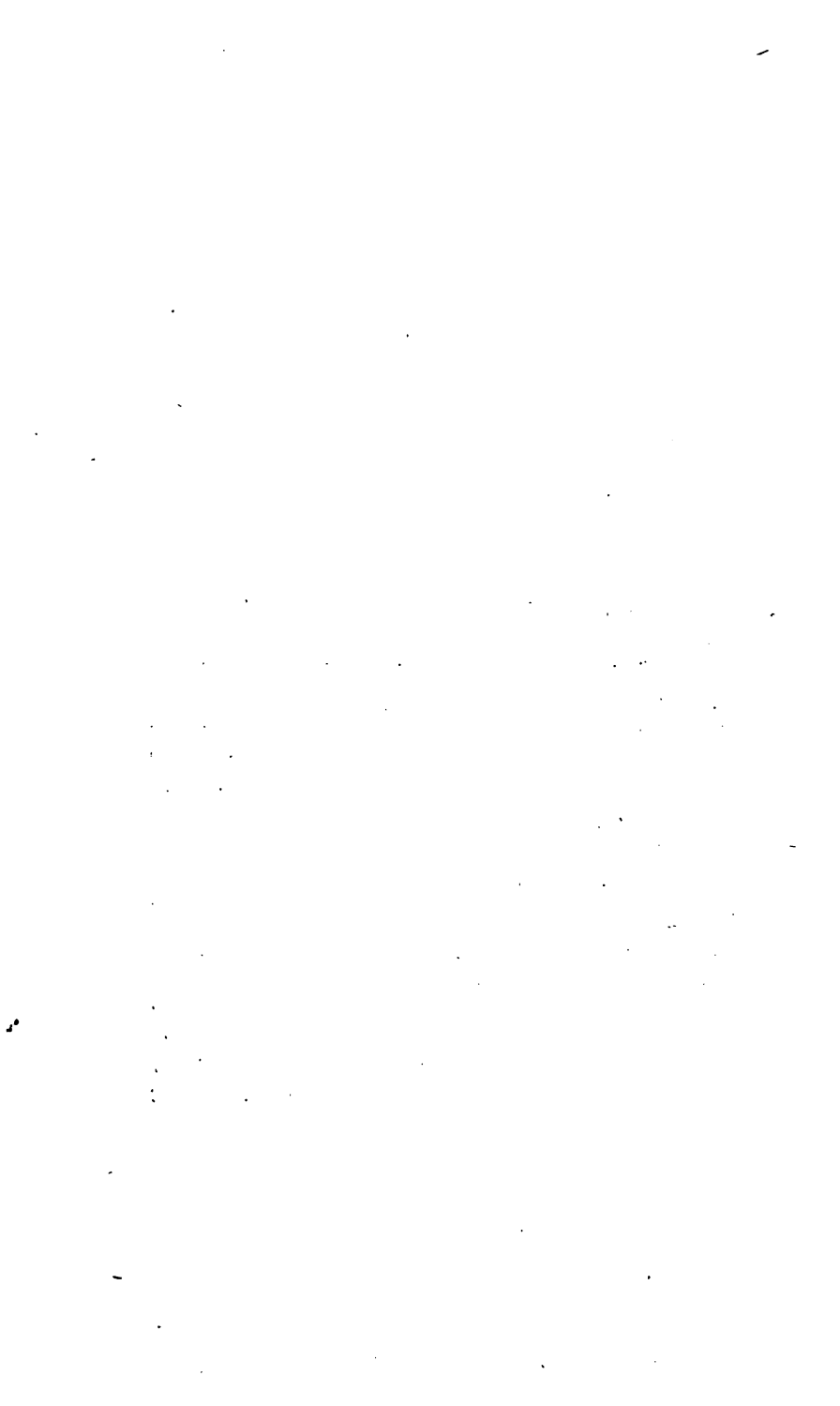


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THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND,

PREVIOUS AND SUBSEQUENT TO THE INTRODUCTION OF
CHRISTIANITY.

THE HISTORY OF IRELAND, previous to the introduction of Christianity, has been considered by the enemies of her ancient fame, as much the theme of the poet, as the calm subject of the dispassionate historian.—The faithful records of our country are rejected as the tales of credulity, and the established glories of its ancient state are considered the dreams of poetry, or the fabrications of national vanity. The satisfactory and laborious researches of O'Connor, O'Halloran, and Vallancey, excite the sneer of scepticism, and their triumphant demonstrations are sarcastically styled the elaborate fictions of a credulous imagination: thus do we often see the English reader, interested perhaps in the calumny and dishonour of Ireland, smile at the honest labours of the patriot, and repel with the affectation of profound philosophy, the struggles of those who have succeeded in proving that Ireland

has been distinguished among the nations of Europe, as the asylum of the muses, the seat of learning and dispenser of knowledge. The enemies of Ireland will in vain labour to tear from the Irish bosom those dear and fond remembrances which their faithful historians have handed down to posterity. The history of ancient Ireland will ever be read by the Irishman as a source of instructive gratification: he will ever look back with honest pride upon those days of her history, when her bards were heard attuning their harps to the glory of their country; immortalizing by their verses the heroism of her sons, and rousing her pride by the ardour and enthusiasm of their appeals.

The Irishman has often found refuge from the misfortunes which were pressing him, in the cherished and sacred reflection, that however afflicted his country, or however borne down her liberties—however oppressed his countrymen, or however hopeless their cause, still he could look back on the history of his country with some degree of complacency; for he saw her described as the instructress of Europe, the dispenser of justice, and the island of saints. With O'Flaherty, he speaks with rapture of the one hundred and seventy-one monarchs, who governed Ireland for two thousand years previous to the invasion of Henry II. all of the same house and lineage:—with him he passionately recurs to his monuments of ancient renown, and contends, with an honest and honourable warmth, for the veracity of poetry, and the accuracy of fancy.

He cannot be the friend of Ireland, who would wantonly attempt to shake the Irish belief in the ancient magnificence and honours of his country ; it should never be forgotten that the finest feelings of the heart are produced by the strong impressions of the ancient fame and glory of our country ; that the human mind is improved and animated by the splendid examples which the historian has recorded, and that he who would advance the cause of religion or of morality, should not struggle to throw a shade on the authenticity of those achievements, or dispute the existence of those names, which, as long as they are credited, must excite the admiration, and perhaps the imitation of mankind.—For those reasons it is hoped that the early history of Ireland would be read by every Irishman as a source of instructive reflection, not as a subject of cold and critical scepticism—he should sympathize with the ardour of the patriot, and shed tears over the grave which covered him—his heart should swell with the independence of his country—with the gallant achievements of her heroes, and he should sink into sadness when those achievements were performed in vain, or when perhaps the most precious blood of his countrymen was sacrificed to the exaltation of foreign or domestic tyranny—with those sentiments I shall proceed to give a brief and faithful, though rapid review of the ancient state of Ireland.

It seems to be acknowledged, that there are no literary monuments in Ireland previous to the introduction of Christianity ; that the evidence of any transaction anterior to this period, solely rests

on the credit of Christian writers: that these, lastly, have taken transcripts from the ancient Irish bards, or from records composed during the ages of paganism. A long list of kings is thus made out from the earliest ages of the world, such as Partholan and his sons, with his hounds and his oxen, the gigantic Fomerians, the Numidians, the Firbolgs, and the Tuatha de Danans. These ancient records state, that about 500 years before the Christian era, a colony of Scythians, immediately from Spain, settled in Ireland, and introduced the Phœnician language and letters; it is also conjectured that previous to the invasion of the Scythians, Ireland might have been peopled from Gaul or Britain; but it is more generally supposed that the sons of Milesius, Heber, Heremon, and Ith, gave a race of kings to Ireland, under whose government Ireland proceeded from barbarism and anarchy, to civilization and refinement; that at length Ollam Fodla arose, and gave to Ireland a regular form of government, instituted a grand seminary of learning, and assembled the Fes, or triennial convention of kings, priests, and bards, at Tarah, in Meath.—Keating writes that the object of this convention was to introduce order, and to punish and suppress those crimes which generally predominate in a period of rudeness and violence. Ollam Fodla, the monarch so celebrated in Irish annals, was succeeded by Kimbath and Hugony; both made great advances in the work of reformation. There were in Ireland five provincial dynasties, and Hugony, to break the power of those rivals, divided the country

into twenty-five dynasties. This arrangement did not long exist; the pentarchy was again restored, and subsequent to this event, the celebrated code or body of laws, called the *Celestial Decisions*, were drawn up by the Irish bards, or Fillas, who were in those ages the dispensers and depositories of the laws. The tranquillity expected to follow from the promulgation of this celebrated code of laws did not take place; and the distraction of the country became so extreme, that an Irish chieftain encouraged Agricola to make a descent on Ireland. The invitation was not accepted, and the Irish historian records with triumph, that the Irish monarch of that day, not only was able to repel any foreign invader, but actually sailed to the assistance of the Picts against the Romans, and returned laden with treasure. On the death of this monarch, whose name was Crimthan, Tuathal succeeded, a prince of the Milesian line; the latter separated Meath from the other provinces of Ireland, and appointed it the special appendage of the monarch: he revived the famous assembly at Taltion in Meath, the great resort of the whole nation. The peace of Tuathal's reign was interrupted by a domestic affliction, which was afterwards the source of national sorrow and distraction. The provincial king of Leinster was married to the daughter of Tuathal, but conceiving an adulterous passion for her sister, pretended his wife had died. He demanded and obtained her sister in marriage; the two ladies met in the royal house of Leinster: the Irish monarch invaded his son-in-law, and the province of Leinster was obliged to pay

a tribute, as a perpetual memorial of Tuathal's resentment. This tribute was resisted; and Con, one of the most famous of the Irish monarchs, (called Con of the Hundred Battles,) was slain in his struggles to enforce so odious an exaction.

Cormac O'Con, grandson of this king, is celebrated by historians as the most renowned of all the Irish monarchs. * The magnificence and splendour of his court, his warlike sons, the number of his generals, his powerful army, their illustrious leader, Finn, the father of Ossian, the immortal bard; the terror of his arms in war, and the mildness of his philosophy in solitude, were equally the theme of universal praise. This distinguished prince is said to have reigned about 254 years after Christ. Cormac O'Con was succeeded by his son Carbray Liffecar, who inherited the wisdom as well as the power of his father. Such was the fury and the fanaticism of faction, that this monarch, with his immediate successors, died by the sword in the field, or by treachery in the palace. Crimthan, who carried his arms into Gaul, and Nial of the

* The days of Cormac were those of the greatest glory; in his time most of the utensils of the court were of pure gold or silver; when he dined in state, he was waited upon by the most distinguished gentlemen of the kingdom, besides 1000 men to guard his palace; on his side-board were 150 cups of massy gold and silver. We may form some idea of the munificence, truly royal, which prevailed at Tara, from the annual consumption of the provincial palace of Brian Boru; 2670 beeves, 1370 hogs, 365 pipes of red, and 150 hogsheads of other wine. Such are the relations of Irish annalists, from Stanihurst and Keating, to O'Connor and O'Halloran.

Nine Hostages, fell victims to the assassin. To Dathy, the last of the Pagan monarchs, annalists assign a long and peaceful reign. It is written, that he was killed by lightning at the foot of the Alps.

The period above described was marked with all those strong and leading features of the human character, which for the most part distinguish the progress of society in other European settlements. Here are to be found a grand display of all the noble passions of our nature, undaunted valour, the most generous effusions of benevolence and hospitality, great disinterestedness, and an insatiable ambition of fame and glory;—on the other hand will be seen examples of implacable resentment, of desperate and vindictive cruelty. To poetry and music * the ancient Irish were peculiarly devoted; to the influence of the bard† every other

* Giraldus Cambrensis, who would conceal the flattering testimony if he could, is obliged to acknowledge the musical genius of our country: “*In musicis solum, præ-omni natione quam videmus, incomparabiliter est instructa gens hæc.*”

† The controversies of the ancient Irish were generally determined by the Brehons. The Brehon seated himself in the open air on a heap of stones, and his decree was final. King John abolished the Brehon laws of Ireland. The Brehons were all of one family, without any knowledge of civil or canon law. They only retain in memory certain decisions, which by use or length of time obtained force, and, by their construction of those, they framed a sort of art, which they by no means suffered to be published, but reserved to themselves as abstruse and recondite mysteries, concealed from common comprehension. Such is the account of those celebrated tribunals, given by Archbishop Usher, Sir James Ware, Sir Richard Cox, Stanihurst, Spencer, and Davis.

power gave way, and to be made mention of in the poet's song was to the Irish hero sufficient compensation for all his toils, and the most consoling soothing of all his sorrows. The ministers of religion were accounted more than human. To the druid was submitted all differences, and from him there was no appeal. He was the oracle of Irish law, and the grand dispenser of public justice. Thus do we see, that the ancient Irish were not insensible to the value of settled laws; and that, while the annalists of other countries have to describe the savage conflicts of the various clans into which their countrymen were perpetually divided, the Irish historian has to record the solemn and venerated decisions of the Druids, before whom the sword of the warrior, and the vengeance of the chieftain bowed with deferential homage. Such was the state of Ireland previous to the introduction of Christianity. From this period we may trace its history with more certainty, less clouded with legendary or poetical fiction. The adversaries of Irish antiquity endeavour to prove, that St Patrick, the great apostle of Christianity in Ireland, was the first to dispel the mists of ignorance and barbarity, and that he abolished the order of Druidism, so ancient, so venerated, and so powerful. On the other hand, the advocates for the old Irish character, contend, that the Irish were prepared by their learned men to receive the divine and benevolent doctrines of Christ, * and that they

* The year 432 commences a new era.—A revolution in religion, and the introduction of Latin letters into Ireland by St

transcribed the scriptures and liturgies given to them by the Irish apostle with the greatest facility. It is however to be admitted, that many instances of revenge and barbarity are exhibited after the introduction of Christianity, and that the divine morality of the * Christian doctrine did not entirely succeed

Patrick, after whom a succession of pious and learned men arose, who gave celebrity to their country for the four following centuries, during which polite and solid literature languished in almost every other corner of Europe. After Rome had again and again been plundered by the Goths, they ceased, it is said, to speak Latin in Rome itself.

* Dr Campbell, in his learned and enlightened Strictures on the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland, makes the following observations on the labours of the Irish Apostle :—" Full thirty years did St Patrick employ in the most active and exemplary discharge of his ministry, instructing the Irish people in the principles of piety and virtue, beginning, as he did, with the elements of knowledge, pointing to the First Author, as the Moral Governor of the Universe, opening, by degrees, the mysteries of Providence in the gracious scheme of redemption, imitating, in this, the procedure of Divine Wisdom, which, at different periods, was pleased to give different revelations of his will, to frail and fallible man, letting in the rays of illumination by little and little, lest, like weak eyes, they should be dazzled by the splendour of too great a blaze, till at length, when the fulness of time was come, he sent that great Light which was finally to irradiate every corner of the earth, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who delivered the glad tidings of our salvation, love to God, good will to man, without distinction of nations, or respect of persons, teaching what philosophy could never teach, that, denying our ungodliness and our worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously in this present world, to entitle us to another and a better, when the world shall pass away, and time and place shall be no more. This excellent personage, being now ninety years old, committed the care of those churches he founded to the pastors which he had set over them, and dedicated the remainder of

in eradicating the old vicious habits of the country. The monks multiplied to a great extent, and became the arbiters of the people. The monks (says Mr O'Connor of Ballenagar), fixed their habitation in deserts, which they cultivated with their own hands, and rendered the most delightful spots. These deserts became well-policed cities; and it is remarkable enough, that to the monks we owe so useful an institution in Ireland as bringing great numbers into one civil community. In those cities the monks set up schools, in which they educated youth, not only of the island, but the neighbouring nations. So writes the venerable Bede. His testimony cannot be contradicted by the enemies of Ireland, that the inhabitants of all parts of Europe resorted to Ireland as the mother of the arts and sciences, the nurse of learning, and the great encourager of the most liberal and philanthropic principles. The darkness of Europe, at this period, gave increased celebrity to the fame of Irish literature; and the 7000 students in the seminary of Armagh alone circulated through the civilized world the literary glory of our illustrious ancestors. Europe, with gratitude, confessed the superior know-

his life to contemplation in different convents.—The entire virtues of a life, already protracted beyond the ordinary limits, and now continued in the pious discharge of monastic functions, could not fail attracting to this venerated patron a sovereign influence over the minds of his converts, and, therefore, we may believe what is recorded of him, that he was enabled to make a temporal provision for the ministers of that religion he had planted, by obtaining from several chieftains endowments of lands, and from the people grants of the tithes of their corn and cattle."

ledge, the piety, and zeal and purity of the Island of Saints. Mr O'Connor (a name dear to the honour of our country) writes, that no essential alterations were attempted by the first Christian missionaries; because they thought that schemes of political legislation belonged properly to the civil power alone. A new code of laws was framed and published by St Patrick in the 5th century, in conjunction with the most celebrated bards and ecclesiastics of that period. This code was denominated Seanchas Moer, or the great antiquity. Some writers (as Sir John Davis and Sir Richard Cox) assert, that the old Irish never had any settled jurisprudence among them, or any written laws; that the judgments of their Brehon or judge were arbitrary and decisive, and that he regulated his opinions more by the uncertain guides of tradition than the settled and confirmed rules of authenticated records. On the other hand, Joseline, Saint Bernard, Cambrensis Eversus (authorities of more credit), contend, that several collections of laws existed in their own days. Roddy, a celebrated Irish antiquarian, removed the doubts of Sir Richard Cox, by shewing him some old Irish law books.

Of the ancient manners of the Irish, it is impossible to give such an account as the mind can rest upon with satisfaction. Credulity and scepticism so balance the scales, that the historian who means to be impartial, should draw a middle line; and it is no small gratification to reflect, that notwithstanding the ardour and enthusiasm with which the advocates of the Irish character relate the achieve-

ments of their countrymen, the wisdom of their laws and regulations, the mildness and paternal tenderness of their government, that much more is to be found worthy of our admiration than the enemies of Ireland are willing to acknowledge ; and that the manners of the ancient Irish were neither odious nor disgusting, nor barbarous, as the great historian of England has industriously represented—thus sacrificing the character, and pride, and honour of Ireland, to the malignant jealousy and envy of his adopted country.

According to the old Irish records, called the book of tributes, the obligations of the monarch and his subjects were reciprocal ; each had their rights defined, and each lived in perpetual and watchful jealousy of the other. The dignity of the monarch was supported by tributes paid by inferior princes ; the withholding of those tributes was often a source of war and convulsion, and each provincial king was interested in supporting the rights of the monarch under whom he derived all his power.

The power and government of each provincial king were exactly similar to that of the monarch ; his successor or tainist was elected in his life-time ; he also received tributes from inferior chieftains, paid for their services, and was entertained by them in his visitations and attendances on his wars. The same system of controul and of service was carried on through all ranks of society. Throughout Ireland the tenure of lands determined with the life of the possessor ; hence the cultivation of grounds

was only in proportion to the immediate demands of nature, and the tributes to be paid to superiors. Among the ancient Irish, hospitality was considered a duty—it was enjoined by law; and no family was suffered to leave their abode without due notice, lest the traveller should be disappointed of his expected reception. The duties to be performed by the subject, and the protection to be afforded by the king, were reciprocal; they were regulated by law; the laird could exact his penalties, or his taxes, under the denomination of Coshierings,* and Bonnaught, and Cuddies, names denoting particular modes of provision for the temporary support of himself and his attendants; and which, under the odious titles of coin and livery, were so severely condemned, and so violently resisted. The laws of the old Irish provided against murder, rape, adultery, theft, robbery; but the punishment inflicted for the perpetration of the most odious crime, with the exception of murder, which was punished with death, was no more than the imposition of a pecuniary penalty or eric, which was generally to be paid to the relations of the party injured. Some opinion of the extreme lenity of the old Irish penal code may be deduced from this example; nor are we to wonder that a people who manifested such anxiety to proportion the punishment to the offence as they always did, should

* Coshiering was free quarters for the chieftain himself—Bonnaught was free quarters for his soldiers—Cuddy was a supper and lodging, which a chief had a right to demand, not only from his subjects, but from his equals. There were other imposts for dogs and horses.

be considered, by Sir John Davis, the greatest lovers of equal and impartial justice.

From the invasion of the English may be dated the decline of that moral and honest principle which seems to have regulated the old Irish in the performance of their duties to their Sovereign and to each other. With regard to their dress, it is minutely and accurately described by Irish authors.* The vest, the trows, the mantle, the enormous linen sleeves dyed with saffron, (the men generally assuming a warlike aspect), their thick beards and great whiskers, their bushy hair hanging over their whiskers, gave them a fierce and formidable appearance. Their customs were as remarkable as their dress. The custom of fosterage† particularly has excited the curiosity of the antiquarian. The Brehon laws seem to intimate that fostering was the occupation of those whose inferior condition rendered them incapable of doing other services to the public. Irish writers state that children were given from different families to be nursed and bred up in others, and that inferiors thus purchased the

* It is a remarkable fact, that linen was so plenty amongst the ancient Irish, that even in the reign of Henry the Eighth, an act passed, prohibiting them putting more than seven yards of linen in a shirt or shift.—*Stat. 28th, Henry 8th.*

† Stanihurst says, on the custom of fosterage, " You cannot find one instance of perfidy, deceit, or treachery among fosterers ; nay, they are ready to expose themselves to all manner of dangers for the safety of those who sucked their mother's milk. You may beat them to mummy, you may put them upon the rack, you may burn them on a gridiron, you may expose them to the most exquisite torture that the cruellest tyrant can invent, yet you will never remove them from that innate fidelity which is grafted in them—you will never induce them to betray their duty.

honour of fostering the children of the rich. Thus, say they, a stricter connection was formed between different families and different tribes. The fragments of the Brehon law, however, contradict this statement. In those laws it is laid down, that wages shall be given to fosterers, in proportion to the time that children continue under their care, and the instruction they have received. The youth in fosterage was instructed in the management of cattle, in husbandry and tillage; and thus an affection and attachment were created between the instructor and the instructed, which seemed to emulate the attachments of the closest affinity. Thus it appears, that the laws, and manners, and customs of the old Irish, do not merit the idle and absurd denunciations, which ignorant malignity has so often pronounced against them. That the rights of Irishmen were accurately defined by their laws, their properties and liberties protected by an impartial administration of justice; that they had their legislative assemblies, their judges, and their clergy, all equally venerated and looked up to by the people; that the noblest sentiments of the heart were cultivated and cherished, and that the Irishman considered his country, when compared with the surrounding world, as the envied land of justice and learning—her bards contributing the efforts of their genius to render her immortal, while the first characters in Europe, with Charlemagne* at their

* It is universally admitted, that, in early times, Ireland was the great mart of literature in Europe. Spencer contends that the Irish had the use of letters long before England, and that

head, were paying homage to her superiority in letters, and to her valour in the field.

Of the invasions of Ireland which took place previous to the invasion of the English monarch, the first was that of Egfred, the king of Northumberland, who made a descent on Ireland in the year 684, as we are informed by Bede, who laments with a kind and benevolent heart the misery and devastation suffered by a people who were most friendly to the English nation. Perhaps for this reason, Henry and his successors visited the beautiful and fertile plains of Ireland with misery and desolation. Soon after, this country was invaded by the Danes and Norwegians; their expeditions commenced about the eighth century. About this period the monarchy of Ireland was enjoyed in alternate succession by the two branches of the Hy-Nial race, the northern house of Tyrone, and the southern, or Clan-Colman, seated in Meath. The

Oswald, a Saxon king, applied to Ireland for learned men to instruct his people in the principles of Christianity. Camden says it abounded with men of genius and erudition, when learning was trampled on in every other quarter of the globe. Irish monks were the founders of the most celebrated abbeys and monasteries in France, Italy, Switzerland, England. The younger Scalliger writes, that, 200 years before the age of Charlemagne, all the learned were of Ireland. The great Alfred brought professors from this seat of science, to his college of Oxford. Mr. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, superciliously remarks, on the ancient literary fame of Ireland, "A people," he writes, "dissatisfied with their present condition, grasp at any vision of the past or future glory;"—thus does this luminous historian draw his pen across the successful labours of our Irish antiquarians."

power of the monarch was limited, but the people were happy, and the country respected by surrounding powers. In the space of twenty years, frequent invasions of these northern hordes took place, each of which harassed the country, and at length succeeded in establishing some small settlements in various parts. In 825, Turgesius, a warlike Norwegian, landed with a powerful armament, pillaged and devastated the country, and seated himself at Armagh, from which he expelled the clergy, and confiscated their property. The Irish, after some resistance, submitted to the conquerors, and the northern leader, after a residence of thirty years, was proclaimed monarch of Ireland.

Historians describe the barbarities of the Norwegians in the most affecting and pathetic colours; their insolence and oppression, their destruction of every monument of learning, their profane havoc of the most sacred records, the overthrow of the most renowned seminaries and religious houses. Such scenes at length awoke the slumbering spirit of Irishmen, and the Danes were annihilated by a sudden and simultaneous insurrection of the people. New colonies came from the north of Europe, and settled in the cities of Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, and other principal towns. Being a trading and industrious race of people, they were suffered to remain unmolested, until large reinforcements of their countrymen made them once more formidable to Ireland.

The most vigorous and dreadful opponent which the northern foreigners ever experienced, was the

illustrious and renowned Brian Boromy, or Brian Boreu. He was king of Munster, and was called to the throne by the unanimous voice of his admiring countrymen; he defeated the Danes and Norwegians in many pitched battles, and roused his countrymen to one universal exertion; his valour threw the king of Ireland into the shade; Malachy was deposed, and Brian Boreu was declared sovereign of his country. Under his parental reign the wounds of Ireland began to heal; churches and seminaries rose from their ruins, lands were cultivated, confidence restored, laws administered and strongly enforced; and while this patriot king was completing his great work of regenerating his native land, he was again invaded by the Danes, with whom he fought the celebrated battle at Clontarf, which, it is supposed, struck at the root of the Danish power in Ireland. The old king numbered his 88th year; he witnessed the fall of his beloved son in this great conflict with the Danes, and it is supposed, that the king himself fell a victim to the dagger of an assassin from the camp of the enemy.

The deposed Malachy was again called to the throne, and after several battles, totally extinguished the power of the Danes in Ireland. The succession being interrupted by the election of Brian Boreu, the Irish nation was involved in the most melancholy scenes of anarchy and distraction, by the struggles of competitors for the Irish throne. The son of Brian disputed the crown with various success. At length the nephew of the Irish monarch was proclaimed king of Ireland.

The laws and the religion of the country were silenced and trampled on, among the clamours of faction and the tumult of arms ; and Bernard the monk, paints those times as the most calamitous in the history of ancient Ireland. Convulsed and weakened by internal feuds and animosities, Ireland was an easy prey to the first invader who descended on her shores. Magnus, the king of Norway, made the experiment, and, in the full confidence of victory, rushed into the heart of the country, without caution or vigilance. The Irish, whose native securities enabled them to take advantage of the precipitate conduct of the king of Norway, darted unexpectedly from their retreats and fastnesses, and cut the invading army to pieces. Factions still continued to mangle and debilitate the Irish people ; and it would appear as if Providence had ordered that Ireland should be prepared, by the follies of her own sons, for that invasion which the English nation soon after effected.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

INVASION OF HENRY II.

FOR a length of time previous to the invasion of Ireland by Henry II, this country might have fallen an easy prey to the ambition of any foreign prince inclined to make the experiment. Torn and convulsed by faction, she would have been unable to struggle with the well regulated excursions of an invading enemy, and the errors of her children might have been the successful allies of Denmark, of Norway, of Sweden, or of England. But all these countries were too much occupied by more important interests, to allow them the opportunity of taking advantage of Ireland's follies and divisions. The mind and passions of Europe were carried down the torrent of religious fanaticism, and the wealth and enterprise of its principal kingdoms found ample employment in the wild and unproductive struggles for the recovery of the Holy Land. The strength, the resources, and value of Ireland,

were not; however, unknown or overlooked by the governments of surrounding nations: her people were celebrated for their valour, their hospitality, and their heroism; the English and the Welsh have fled for succour and protection to Ireland, and the three sons of Harold found a safe and hospitable asylum in this country, when pursued by the triumphant arms of William the Conqueror. An Irish army contended on English ground for the rights of Englishmen, against the merciless and despotic ambition of William; and we are informed by Irish annalists, that Murtough, the Irish monarch, was solicited by the Earl of Pembroke to defend him against the vengeance of Henry I. France assiduously courted Irish alliance; and the formidable co-operation of this country with the enemy of England, first pointed out to Henry II. the policy of annexing Ireland to his English dominions.

Various pretexts were assigned by the English monarch, to justify the invasion of a country, which might be either a perpetual source of strength or of weakness, which might be the bulwark of England, or its most formidable enemy; and possessed of the wealth and resources with which it was known to abound, would be ever an object of jealousy and rivalry to the wealth and the industry of Englishmen, and of respect and regard to foreigners. We are not to wonder, therefore, that every artifice which power and talents could suggest, or which the superstition of the times would countenance and encourage, should have been practised by Henry, to

justify the violence of his proceedings against a brave and unoffending nation. We accordingly find, that Pope Adrian was prevailed on by the solicitation of the English monarch, to grant a bull, investing Henry with full power and authority to invade the kingdom of Ireland; and that, in the language of this solemn instrument issued by his holiness, "Henry II. should enter the kingdom of Ireland, with the pious purpose of extending the borders of the church, restraining the progress of vice, correcting the manners of its inhabitants, and increasing the influence of religion; and that in consideration for this power so vested in the English monarch, the annual pension of one penny for every house, be levied and delivered over to the service of St. Peter." This bull, with a ring, the token of investiture, was presented to Henry, as rightful sovereign of Ireland.

Such is the ground of Henry's justification for the invasion of this country; and such is the flimsy covering which interested historians throw over the spirit of usurpation and ambition, that first urged the English nation to trample upon the liberties of Ireland; and by fraud and violence to desolate a country, illustrious for its kindness and its hospitality, its sincerity and honour; possessed of qualities which would have made her a useful and powerful ally, and which afterwards became the fruitful source of bitterness and disaster to Englishmen.

It is recorded, that about the period of the English invasion, certain ceremonies and points of discipline of the Irish church were first assimilated to

those of Rome ; that Cardinal Paparon was delegated by the Pope to new-model the ecclesiastical constitution of Ireland, for which purpose, Irish annalists state, that he assembled three thousand clergymen, regular and secular, in the town of Drogheda, about the year 1152 ; that at this period the discipline of Rome was universally established, and the spiritual pre-eminence of the Pope formally recognised. The preparations of Henry for the invasion were interrupted by the insurrections of his brother Geoffry in the province of Anjou ;—his invasion of Wales, and his contests with Becket and the church, kept him in a continued state of agitation, and suspended the fate of Ireland for a considerable time. The circumstances of this country were peculiarly well calculated to encourage the speculations of a king, whose force was undivided and entire, whose power was uncontrouled, and whose genius was equal to the magnitude of the undertaking. Ireland was then governed by a monarch, the tenure of whose government depended for the most part on his personal valour and abilities : perpetually harassed by factions, and opposed by powerful rivals ; his subjects frequently disputing the extent of his powers, the rights of his sovereignty, and taking up or laying down their arms according to the caprice of the hour, or the influence of faction. For example :—of Ulster, the family of Hy-Nial were the hereditary sovereigns ; of Munster, the descendants of the illustrious O'Brian ; of Connaught, the family of O'Connor ; and Leinster gave the title of royalty to Dermot

M'Murchad, a prince handed down to posterity by Irish annalists in the most odious and contemptible colours.

The rival monarchs of Ireland were, O'Connor, king of Connaught, and Hy-Nial, king of Ulster. The former, in conjunction with Dermod, king of Leinster, overran the territory of O'Rourk, the prince of Breffney or Leitrim; and seduced O'Rourk's wife, whose name was Deverghall. This outrage was the fruitful parent of that long series of misery experienced by Ireland for centuries after. O'Rourk succeeds in his efforts to separate O'Connor from his alliance with the king of Leinster, and, aided by the arms of the western monarch, recovers his wife from the adulterer. Roderic O'Connor succeeded to the throne of his father, Turlogh O'Connor. This prince proceeded to Dublin, immediately after his father's death, and was there solemnly inaugurated. He then marched to the north, and was received by the chieftains of Ulster with every mark of the most respectful submission. Dermod fled before the united forces of Roderic and O'Rourk, whose honour he had abused; and his subjects unanimously deposed him as unworthy to be their king. Roderic, in his progress through the country, appeared in all the pomp and pride of majesty, acknowledged by all as their rightful and beloved sovereign. He held a magnificent convention of the states at Meath, where the honours and magnificence of his country were revived with all their ancient glory; and independent and imperial Ireland, which had been rudely

assailed by factions, seemed once more to raise her head under the guidance of a monarch whose courage and whose talents were the boast and admiration of his countrymen. Dermot, deserted by his people, an object of detestation and contempt, prompted by the indignant feelings of insulted and fallen pride, threw himself into the arms of England, as the last and only refuge he could find from the persecution of his malignant fortunes. He embarked for England with sixty of his most trusty followers, where he was received with unbounded hospitality. Henry, the English monarch, was at this time endeavouring to suppress the insurrection of his subjects in his French dominions. Dermot immediately repaired to Henry, and laid at his feet the story of his misfortunes and persecutions in his native country. He implored the aid of the British king, and, if supported by his arms in the assertion of his undoubted rights, promised to hold his recovered dominions in vassalage to Henry and his heirs.

The insurrection of Henry's French subjects, the obstinate rebellion of his brother Geoffry, and the more obstinate resistance of Bishop Becket, prevented Henry going in person to vindicate the cause, and assert the rights of the exiled Irish king ; but he gave a licence to such of his English subjects as were disposed to aid Dermot in the recovery of his rights. Dermot returned to England, full of hope and confidence. He was joined by Earl Pembroke and Robert Fitzstephen, both Welsh noblemen, and celebrated in their own country as men

of high spirit, and splendid achievements. To these adventurers Dermod promised the entire dominion of the town of Wexford, with a large adjoining territory, as soon as, by their assistance, he should be reinstated in his rights. After Dermod had concluded this treaty with these Welsh adventurers, he proceeded to Ireland to inform his friends that he was about to be supported by a powerful foreign alliance. He landed at Wexford, where he lay concealed in a monastery, until the returning spring brought round the period at which the arrival and co-operation of the English allies were expected. Roderic, king of Ireland, hearing of the arrival of Dermod, immediately marched against the latter, and forced him to fly for shelter to the woods. Dermod, sensible of his inability to wage so unequal a war with Roderic, submitted to the Irish monarch, and gave hostages for his future peaceable and loyal conduct. Roderic agreed to the terms of submission, and again reposed confidence in his fidelity. These pledges of peace had not long been given by Dermod to Roderic, when his English allies appeared on the coast of Wexford. Robert Fitzstephen, with thirty knights, sixty men in armour, and three hundred archers, all chosen men of Wales, arrived in Ireland in the year 1170.—The army was reinforced with ten knights, and two hundred archers, under the command of Maurice ap Pendergast, the valiant Welshman. The report of this formidable invasion, (formidable when we consider the divisions of Ireland,) had no sooner circulated through the neighbouring counties, than the old subjects of

Dermod conceived it expedient to resume their allegiance, and to crowd round his standard, with all the ardour of the most zealous loyalty. The combined forces marched to Wexford, and the Irish and Ostmen, who then governed the town, marched out to meet the enemy. The Irish army were compelled to return to the town, and the enemy, encouraged by this temporary success, pursued them to the gates of the city. The Irish turned upon their pursuers, and drove back the enemy with considerable loss. At length the clergy of the garrison interposed their mediation between the besieged and besiegers, and Wexford was given up to Dermod, and Earl Pembroke, who was immediately invested with the lordship of the city and domain. Harvy of Mountmauris was also head of two considerable districts, on the coast between Wexford and Waterford. Here was settled the first colony of British inhabitants, differing in manners, customs, and language, from the natives, and even to this day preserving that difference in a very remarkable degree, notwithstanding the lapse of many ages. Dermod immediately proceeded at the head of his combined forces, amounting to 3000 men, to lay waste the territory of the prince of Ossory, (a part of Leinster,) which he desolated with fire and sword; and though the Irish army made a most heroic resistance to the invader, the superiority of English discipline and English arms, counterbalanced the advantages which the Irish enjoyed from their superior knowledge of the country. Had the latter patiently remained in the woods and morasses,

where the English cavalry could not act, they would have wearied the courage, and baffled the discipline of the invaders, and perhaps would have preserved the independence of their country. A reliance on the intrepidity of their soldiers, betrayed them from their native situations into the open plains, where they were exposed to the superior generalship of the English invader.

English historians have laboured, with malicious industry, to paint the comparative superiority of their countrymen, over the wild and barbarous natives of Ireland; and hesitate not to brand with the infamous epithets of cruel, and savage, and uncultivated, these unoffending people, whose properties the English were desolating, whose peace they were disturbing, and on the rights and liberties of whose country they were about to trample.

The vengeance of an unprincipled and exiled Irish monarch found refuge in the ambition and avarice of English adventurers; and the miserable and afflicting scenes, which the reader of Irish history is doomed to wade through, were acted under the specious and insulting pretext of order, religion, and morality—but to proceed. Dermot succeeded in bringing to subjection the revolted subjects of his government, and prepared to defend himself against the denunciations of the Irish monarch, who now began to be alarmed, at an invasion which he had hitherto viewed with contempt, and without apprehension.

The Irish reader contemplates, with a mixture of gratification and melancholy, the picture of mag-

nificence and grandeur which the preparations of the monarch of Ireland present to his view, for the invasion of the territories of Dermod, and the expulsion of the English army, who presumed to violate the independence of Ireland. He convened the estates of the nation at Tarah, in Meath. He ordained new laws, raised and regulated new seminaries, distributed splendid donations to the various professors of learning, and assembled and reviewed the army in presence of the vassal Irish sovereigns, who waited on their monarch. Dermod, deserted by his subjects on the approach of the Irish monarch, fled to his fastnesses in Wexford, where he strongly entrenched himself.

Before Roderic unsheathed his sword, he remonstrated with the English leaders on the injustice and cruelty of their invasion; on the shameful and odious connection they had formed with an adulterer, and traitor to his country; and that the war they were about to wage with the Irish, was as impolitic as it was unprincipled; for surely, said the monarch of Ireland, Englishmen cannot suppose that Ireland will surrender her rights to a foreign power, without a dreadful and sanguinary struggle.

Fitzstephen, the English general, refused to desert his Irish ally, and determined to abide the event of the contest. Roderic still hesitated, before he would proceed to force; and at the moment he could have crushed this infant effort of the English, to subjugate his country, he was solicited by the clergy to enter into a treaty with Dermod; the prin-

principal condition of which was, that he should immediately dismiss the British, with whom again he was never to court an alliance. Soon after this treaty, we find the English general, Fitzstephen, building a fort at Carrig, remarkable for the natural strength of its situation. Dermot, supported by his English allies, proceeded to Dublin, and laid waste the territories surrounding that city with fire and sword. The citizens laid down their arms, and supplicated mercy from the cruel and malignant enemy. It is the duty of the historian to record, that the inhabitants of this devoted city found refuge in the mercy of the English general, who interposed to allay the fury of Dermot's vengeance. Dermot was not inattentive to every opportunity which afforded him a pretext to violate the treaty, into which force alone obliged him to enter with the Irish monarch. He defended the son-in-law of Donald O'Brien, prince of Thomond, against the efforts of Roderic to reduce him to obedience, and again solicited the aid of his English allies, to assert the rights of his family, against the ambition and pretensions of the Irish monarch. The English generals cheerfully obeyed the invitation; and Roderic, alarmed by the rumours of the formidable strength of the allied armies, declined, for the present, to curb the licentiousness of the prince of Thomond, or to dispute the rights of Dermot to the sovereignty of Leinster.

The son of Dermot was then in the power of Roderic, as an hostage for the allegiance of his father. He threatened Dermot with the destruction

of his child, if he did not instantly return to his obedience, dismiss his English allies, and ceased to harass and disturb his unoffending neighbours.

Dermod defied the power of Roderic, was careless of the fate of his son, and openly avowed his pretensions to the sovereignty of Ireland. The head of the young Dermod was instantly struck off by order of Roderic. The English continued to spread through the country the wide wasting calamities of a sanguinary war; their thirst of blood seemed to increase with the number of their victims, and their spirit of destruction with the bountiful productions of nature, which covered the country around them. At length the jealousy of the British sovereign awoke, and suspended the fate of this unhappy people; and the meanest passion of the human mind prompted Henry to take those measures which justice should have dictated.

Henry issued his edict, forbidding any future supplies of men or of arms to be sent to Ireland, and commanding all his subjects there instantly to return. Strongbow immediately dispatched Raymond to his sovereign, to endeavour to allay his jealousy, and to impress his sovereign with the conviction, that whatever they had conquered in Ireland, was conquered for Henry, and that he alone was the rightful possessor of all those territories which had submitted to the arms of Strongbow. Raymond was received with haughtiness and distrust by the English monarch, who refused to comply with his solicitations. At this period bishop Becket was murdered; a circumstance which to Henry was a

source of bitter affliction. The king of Leinster died, amidst the triumphs of his allies, despised by the English, who took advantage of his treason, and execrated by the Irish as an infamous and unprincipled exile. The death of this prince was immediately followed by an almost total defection of the Irish from the earl Strongbow. The earl was compelled to shut himself up: cut off from supplies, and dejected in spirits, he was thus precipitated from the summit of victory, to the lowest gradation of distress. This cheering fact flew through Ireland; and the Irish chieftains crowded from all quarters, went from province to province, animating the people to one bold and general effort against the common enemy of Irish liberty.

Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, distinguished himself on this occasion by the zeal and vigour of his patriotism. The sanctity of his character gave weight to his representations. His appeals to the insulted spirit of Irish independence were heard with rapture; and an army, composed of men determined to assert the rights of Ireland, rose up at his call. Dublin was surrounded on all sides, the harbour blocked up, and Strongbow, with an army, which had a few weeks back been desolating the fields of Ireland, was threatened with annihilation by a powerful and indignant monarch. Roderic encamped his troops at Castlenock, westward of Dublin. O'Rourke of Leitrim placed himself north of the harbour, near Clontarf. The lord of O'Kinselagh occupied the opposite side, while the prince of Thomond advanced to Kilmainham, within less

than a mile from the walls of the metropolis. Even Laurence, the archbishop, appeared in arms, animating his countrymen to the defence of their liberties against the cruel and desolating invasion of foreign adventurers. The English army might now have paid the forfeit of the injustice and the cruelty which they practised on the Irish, had the latter been animated by one spirit, or directed by one absolute commander. Strongbow took advantage of jealousies and rivalships which existed in the Irish army, and, driven by the desperation of his circumstances, boldly rushed upon the besieging army, and succeeded in dispersing a force which threatened the besieged with annihilation. So confident was the Irish monarch of expelling from his country that proud and insolent force which dared to invade its shores, that he rejected with disdain the overtures of Strongbow, who proposed to acknowledge Roderic as his sovereign, provided the latter would raise the siege. Nothing short of Strongbow's departure from Ireland, with all his forces, would appease the insulted majesty of Ireland. So humiliating a condition served but to rouse from despair the brave and intrepid spirit of Strongbow. He made one effort more, which succeeded in rescuing himself and his faithful followers from the most distressing difficulties. Strongbow immediately proceeded to Wexford and Waterford, and devoted some time at Ferns to the exercise of his sovereign authority as undisputed king of Leinster. Here he distributed rewards among his friends, and inflicted punishments on the disaffect-

ed. Strongbow was at length summoned to appear before the British monarch, who, having conquered all the difficulties with which he had to combat, both from foreign and domestic enemies, was alarmed at the triumphs of his English subjects in Ireland. The earl obeyed. He appeared before his sovereign, and justified his conduct; he surrendered Dublin, with all the maritime forts and towns, to Henry. Strongbow was suffered by the monarch to retain all his Irish possessions, to be held by the British sovereign and his heirs. O'Rourk of Breffney made a vigorous attack on Dublin, which was bravely defended by Milo de Cogan, one of the boldest and the most intrepid of the English adventurers. O'Rourk lost his son in the attack; a source of bitter affliction to the Irish army. Those extraordinary successes, by an army who were reduced to the greatest extremity, impressed the people of Ireland with dreadful anticipations of that force, which the English monarch had determined to march into their country. The artifices adopted by Henry were not less calculated to conciliate, than the fame of his arms and his talents were to intimidate. He affected to be incensed at the depredations committed by his English subjects on the unoffending people of Ireland, and promised this credulous nation, that he would inflict on their oppressors the most exemplary punishment. Such professions induced numbers to proffer their submission to Henry, and to co-operate with this artful monarch in the conquest of their native land. Not less auxiliary to the designs and speculations of Henry were the malignant jealousies of the Irish

chieftains towards each other. Each seemed to think only for his own ambition, for his own aggrandisement; all sacrificed their common country to the miserable passions of envy, of jealousy, or of rivalry. Henry, with his accustomed talent, seized the opportunity which Irish folly afforded him, and determined to invade Ireland, with such a force as would ensure an easy conquest of this beautiful and fertile country. He collected a fleet of 240 ships, which conveyed an army consisting of 400 knights and 4000 soldiers, headed by Strongbow.

William Fitzansdelm, Hugh de Lacy, and Robert Fitzbernard, with this powerful force, arrived in Waterford, in October, 1172. The fame of this celebrated expedition, the magnitude of the undertaking, the well known talents of its leader, his artful and dexterous negotiations with the respective Irish chieftains, the misfortunes which flowed from struggles with comparatively petty adventurers,—all these circumstances concurred to induce the various Irish chieftains to volunteer in doing homage to the English monarch. The same sentiment seemed to influence the minds of all; and we are therefore told that Dermot MacCarty, prince of Desmond, * resigned the city of Limerick to the

* Desmond, anciently Desmunham or south Munster, was formerly a country in the province of Munster, but now a part of the counties of Kerry, or Cork. Its ancient kings were the MacCarty's, hereditary chiefs of Cork. After the arrival of the English, it gave title to a branch of the Fitzgeralds, who were afterwards attainted by Queen Elizabeth; also to Sir Richard Preston, Lord Dingwall, in Scotland; and at present it gives title to the family of Fielding, Earl of Denbigh, in England.

sovereignty of Henry, engaging to pay tribute, on condition that he was to enjoy a certain portion of territory without any further molestation or restraint. The chiefs of Munster vied with each other in the alacrity of their submissions. Henry returned to Wexford, and stationed garrisons at Cork, Waterford, and Limerick. He then proceeded to Dublin, and in passing through the country, the Irish chieftains of Limerick appeared before the English monarch, and became his tributaries. The rapid progress of Henry's arms, and the defection of the Irish chiefs, from the standard of their lawful monarch, alarmed the Irish king.

Roderic, though abandoned by those vassal kings who swore allegiance to him, and harassed by the dissensions of his family and the factions of his people, would not resign his title to the monarchy of Ireland, without a great and formidable struggle. He collected his faithful troops, and intrenched himself on the banks of the Shannon. Hugh de Lacy, and Fitzansdelm, were ordered by Henry to reduce the refractory monarch to subjection. The brave and powerful chiefs of Ulster still remained unsubdued, and Roderic determined to surrender the dignity of his country but with his life. Henry left no arts unpractised to seduce the Irish chieftains from their allegiance. He dazzled the eyes of the people by the splendour of his hospitality ; he deceived them by the most conciliating expressions of kindness ; he intoxicated the base and degraded Irishman by the magnitude of his professions, and consoled the afflicted and depressed spirits of a

subjugated people, by a perpetual round of costly pleasures, of empty though splendid pageantry. Such, for 600 years, has been the insidious practice of England towards this devoted country ; the hospitality of the viceroy's table, put into the scale against the miserable consequences of a narrow and malignant policy, which, full of jealousy and terror, cramps the industry, corrupts the morals, and encourages the most vicious and unprincipled propensities of our nature.

It is asserted by English historians, that the Irish clergy pressed forward with peculiar alacrity, to make their submission to Henry ; but, for the honour of the Irish clergy, it is very remarkable, that the most celebrated prelate of Ireland at that period, Gelasius, primate of Armagh, refused to attend ; or, in other words, refused to sanction, by his presence, the usurpations of Henry. The English monarch, it is true, found some ready instruments among the Irish clergy, who prostituted their ministry in the service of the invader. They were a small and contemptible minority ; and in the age of Henry II., as well as in subsequent times, the majority of the Irish clergy could not be seduced by corruption, nor intimidated by terror, into a surrender of their liberties, or the rights of their countrymen. The synod assembled at Cashel, ordered that no marriages should take place within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity ; it directed, that baptism should be publicly administered, that the youth should be instructed, tythes regularly paid, and the land of the clergy exempted from secular

exactions. At this synod, Henry did not presume to innovate upon the ancient discipline and usages of the Irish church. The old Irish customs remained untouched, but, with regard to the clergy, some mitigation of the heavy penalties imposed on them was recommended and adopted. It appears, that Henry never hazarded the experiment of imposing the laws of England on his Irish subject chieftains. The latter stipulated to become his vassals and tributaries; and Henry, on his part, engaged to protect them in the administration of their separate governments, according to their own laws and customs. * They governed their people,

* The unwarranted contempt and malignity with which Mr Hume speaks of the old Irish character, and which he so unphilosophically discovers in all his observations on the people of this insulted country, cannot but excite the indignation, and wound the pride of every man who has read our ancient history, or who has followed the melancholy relation of Irish suffering. The ancient fame of this beautiful island, in arts as well as in arms, and the cruel devastation which it suffered from those hands that calumniated and slandered the memory of the people whom they plundered, are recorded by authors too powerful, and too commanding of universal credit, to be set aside by a philosophic sneer of contempt, or satirical sarcasm of incredulity, though coming from the pen of so great and so profound an historian as Mr Hume. On this subject his usual love of truth and justice deserts him; and we behold with sorrow one of the ablest historians which the world has produced, carried down the stream of inveterate prejudice with the humblest pames, who have presumed to defame and falsify the character of the Irish nation.

Mr Hume thus writes of the ancient state of Ireland :

“The Irish, from the beginning of time, had been buried in the most profound barbarism and ignorance; and as they were never conquered, or even invaded by the Romans, from whom all the western world derived its civility, they continued

says Sir John Davis, by the Brehon law, they made their own magistrates, they pardoned and punished all malefactors within their respective jurisdictions, they made war and peace, without any foreign controul or dictation; and this they did, not only in the reign of Henry II., but in all subsequent times, until the reign of Elizabeth. Soon after Henry obtained possession of Dublin, he granted it by charter to the inhabitants of Bristol, to be

still in the most rude state of society, and were distinguished only by those vices to which human nature, not tamed by education, nor restrained by laws, is for ever subject. The small principalities, into which they were divided, exercised perpetual rapine and violence against each other. The uncertain succession of their princes was a continual source of domestic convulsions. The usual title of each petty sovereign, was the murder of his predecessor. Courage and force, though exercised in the commission of crimes, were more honoured than any pacific virtues; and the most simple arts of life, even tillage and agriculture, were almost wholly unknown among them. They had felt the invasions of the Danes, and other northern people; but these inroads, which had spread barbarism in the other northern parts of Europe, tended rather to improve the Irish; and the only towns which were to be found in this island, had been planted along the coast by the freebooters of Norway and Denmark. The other inhabitants exercised pasturage in the open country, sought protection from any danger in their forts and morasses, and being divided by the severest animosities against each other, were still more intent on the means of mutual injury, than on expeditions for the common, or even for private interest." Thus writes Mr Hume against the testimony of Bede, Camden, Keating, Usher, O'Connor, and almost every name worthy of our veneration. And thus does the great English historian fling into the shade, the enormities of that power, which was the fruitful parent of all those jealousies and convulsions, that rendered Ireland an easy prey to its insatiable and consuming rapacity.

held of him and his heirs, with the same liberties and customs which they enjoyed at Bristol. He also divided that part of Ireland which was immediately subject to him, or which is generally denominated within the pale, into shires and counties. He appointed sheriffs for counties and cities, with judges itinerant; officers of justice, and of state, and all the appendages of English government, and English law. He also appointed a chief governor, who was to exercise the royal authority in his absence; and made such regulations as were in his mind calculated to perpetuate his authority, and confirm his conquests. The affairs of England now demanded the attention of Henry; and the threatened denunciations of the Roman pontiff obliged him to suspend his proceedings against Ireland, and to return, with all possible expedition, to the protection of his English dominions. Henry was thus compelled to leave the greater part of Ireland unsubdued; and those parts which submitted to him, were under the government of men whose allegiance was questionable, and whose ambition and avarice were insatiable. The west of Ireland, under Roderic, the north, under O'Neil, was still unconquered.—Henry settled his confidential officers, and gave to each the command of the most principal places which had submitted to him. To Hugh de Lacy, he granted the whole territory of Meath, and made him governor of Dublin. He commanded forts and castles to be raised in Dublin; and granted to John de Courcy the entire province

of Ulster, provided he could reduce it by force of arms.

Had not the English monarch been thus interrupted in his efforts to reduce the kingdom of Ireland, the latter might have escaped the tedious and lingering torture of protracted warfare. The intriguing talents of Henry would have achieved what the merciless sword of the mercenary soldier could scarcely effect, and prosperity would have been rescued from the afflicting visitations of civil war, flowing from the struggles of the rapacity of a vindictive conqueror, with the indignant bravery of insulted freedom.

Henry embarked at Wexford, and landed at Pembrokehire, on the feast of Easter 1173. From hence he proceeded to Normandy, to meet the convention of cardinals there, assembled by the direction and authority of the Pope. It is said, the Roman pontiff Alexander, consented, at this convention, to confirm the grant of Ireland by Pope Adrian.

Sir John Davis observes, that Henry left not one true or faithful subject behind him, more than he found when he first landed. A small interval of time elapsed, until the old animosities and jealousies of the Irish chieftains broke out with their accustomed fury, and, impatient of the yoke to which they had submitted, manifested a disposition to rebel against the authority, to which they had so lately, and so reluctantly submitted.

The followers of Henry proceeded, after the departure of their master, to make such regulations,

and adopt such measures, as might secure the subjection of the conquered Irish. They parcelled out lands to their most attached English friends, and drove the unoffending natives from the inheritance of their forefathers. Such measures roused the indignation of Roderic, the prince of Breffney* or Leitrim. He repaired to Dublin, and insisted upon a conference at Tara. This conference was held; but, as English historians relate, O'Rourk endeavoured, insiduously, to ensnare the unwary English general, who had nigh fallen a victim to his confidence in his honour. Here it may be permitted to observe, that the situation of O'Rourk, the Irish chieftain, rendered him more independent of the dishonourable artifices, with which he is charged, than that of the English viceroy De Lacy. That the cautions which historians put into the mouths of De Lacy's friends not to trust to the honour of O'Rourk, were only more artful modes of concealing the stratagem, which was planned and executed by the English, and that an Irish chieftain, from his rank, situation, and condition, would be less likely to put into practice the low or

* Breffney or Breghane, that is, the country of the little hills, called also Hy-re Leigh, or the district of the country of the king, the chiefs of which were the O'Reillys. The subordinate districts of this country were each governed by their respective chiefs, viz. O'Rourk, O'Brady, O'Carry, O'Sheridan, MacKurnam, and MacGauroll, most of whom were in possession of their estates at the beginning of the last century. Breffney is now called the county of Cavan, in the province of Ulster, though formerly it took in Leitrim, and was divided into east and west Breffney.

the mean artifices of cowardly policy, than those administrations, whose diminished forces were now confined to a very small portion of Irish territory, and who would leave no experiment untried by which their objects could be obtained, or their enemy vanquished. O'Rourk fell a victim at this conference, and De Lacy was thus liberated from one of his most formidable opponents.

The Irish loudly proclaimed the treachery by which their favourite prince was sacrificed, and vowed the most dreadful vengeance on his destroyers. At this period the English monarch was engaged in endeavouring to suppress the formidable rebellion of his son Henry in Normandy. The latter was joined by the French and Scottish monarchs, and threatened his royal parent with the loss of his foreign dominions. Henry, with that promptitude which always distinguished his character, led a powerful army into France. Strongbow flew from Ireland to the assistance of his master, and entrusted its government to Raymond le Gross. Strongbow's departure was no sooner made known to the Irish, than their chieftains disavowed their submissions, and boldly hurled defiance against those of the English adventurers who presumed to remain in Ireland. The English army became mutinous and discontented, and their commanders jealous, and envious of each other. Such differences would have been fatal to the English interests in Ireland, were they not put an end to by the appointment of Strongbow to the vice-regency of Ireland. The latter, however useful an auxiliary to Henry, in his

the pride of every independent Irishman. The Irish monarch, fatigued with the repeated efforts which he made to restore peace to his country, and depressed by the perfidy of his chieftains, determined at length to submit to Henry, under whom he might be able to hold his sovereignty, and to preserve his people against the afflicting calamities of war. It is almost impossible to look back to the conduct of the Irish monarch, on this occasion, without partaking of that sensibility which seemed to animate his royal bosom. Full of ardent and parental affection for his subjects, he preferred even the mortification of being the royal vassal of Henry, to making an unprofitable effort for the assertion of his sovereignty. He therefore determined on treating with the English monarch himself, and not through the medium of his generals. He sent forward his ambassadors to England, Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, the abbot of St Brandon, and Laurence, chancellor to Roderic. The terms of accommodation were agreed upon between the two monarchs. Roderic bound himself by treaty to pay an annual tribute, namely, every tenth merchantable hide, and to acknowledge the king of England as his liege lord. The Irish monarch was, by the conditions of his treaty with Henry, to enjoy the uncontrolled administration of his kingdom; his royal rights were left inviolate; the English laws were to be confined, as we have said before, to the English pale. The submission of Roderic promised days of peace to Ireland; of strength and of glory to England.

But the jealousies of Henry's generals, their ambition and their avarice, were new sources of anxiety to their king, and of distraction to his Irish subjects. Raymond le Gross (one of the most distinguished officers in the service of Henry), was impeached by Harvey of Mountmorris, and were it not that O'Brien of Thomond, the irreconcilable enemy of England, had laid siege to Limerick, Raymond would have been obliged to defend himself against the unjust and malicious charges of his enemies. He was solicited by his persecutors to lead the English army against the common enemy; he yielded, and immediately advanced against the prince of Thomond, whose army he defeated. O'Brien, exhausted by an unsuccessful contest, submitted to become the vassal of Henry; he presented his hostages, and took the oath of fealty in company with Roderic the Irish king, who also gave hostages as a security for his future allegiance. The destructive quarrels and animosities which frequently disgraced the first Irish families, again gave an opportunity to Raymond le Gross to extend his conquests in Munster. MacCarty, prince of Desmond, was deposed by his son Cormac, and fled for refuge and revenge to the English general, who instantly engaged in an enterprize which promised to extend his fame. He invaded the territories of Desmond, and plundered them without mercy;—a great portion of that part of Desmond called Kerry, was conferred by MacCarty on Raymond for this achievement. About this period (1176) the viceroy, Earl Strongbow, died. The manner of his

death is accurately described by the pen of superstitious vengeance; nor is it to be wondered by the impartial reader, of the sad variety of suffering inflicted upon Ireland, by the arms of England, that the Irish annalist should have given credit to the rumours that devoted this celebrated English adventurer to a mysterious and miserable termination of his existence. The desolation and calamity with which this unhappy country was visited, the degradation with which it was threatened, and the sad and affecting story which history was doomed to record, must have naturally called up those honest feelings of resentment which fill the bosoms of fallen pride and insulted honour. No wonder the persecuted Irish should look up to Heaven for its vengeance on their oppressors, and that their tortured fancies should anticipate the mediation of that God whose altars were insulted, and whose temples were laid prostrate.

Raymond le Gross being informed of Strongbow's death, immediately repaired to Dublin. He entrusted to Donald O'Brien, prince of Thomond, the protection of Limerick. Raymond had no sooner departed, than O'Brien declared that Limerick should no longer be a nest of foreigners. In the meantime, Strongbow was interred with the most solemn pomp in Christ church, Dublin, and the ceremonies performed by the celebrated prelate, Laurence O'Toole. Soon after, a council was called, and Raymond le Gross unanimously elected viceroy of Ireland. This election, notwithstanding the past services of Raymond, did not meet with the approbation of Henry;

he forbade the nomination, and substituted William Fitzansdelm, a nobleman allied to Henry by blood. John de Courcy, Robert Fitzstephen, Milo de Cogan, and Vivian, the pope's legate, accompanied the viceroy to Ireland. The legate was the bearer of the pope's brief, confirming Henry's title to Ireland. Raymond received the new viceroy with all due respect. An assembly of the Irish clergy was convened at Waterford, at which the brief of Alexander, and the bull of Adrian, were solemnly promulgated. This assembly of the clergy took place in the year 1177. The administration of Fitzansdelm seemed to be more directed against his predecessors in power, than to the extension of his royal master's interests. Giraldus Cambrensis says, that he was sensual and corrupt, rapacious and avaricious; and though not formidable from the terror of his arms, yet full of craft, of fraud, and dissimulation. Raymond le Gross was thrown into the shade, his property exchanged, and every mark of indignity and insult offered to those adventurers who had succeeded in making the first English establishment in Ireland. The north of Ireland was now marked out by the English adventurers as a scene of plunder and confiscation, which would afford ample rewards to the spirit of heroic enterprise, and ample compensation for the hardships and difficulties to be contended with. The cruel and rapacious De Courcy selected the north as the theatre of his military fame. He was the first to visit its inhabitants with the calamities of war, and the more disastrous effects of foreign intrigue, with do-

mestic treachery. Astonished and confounded at the horrid outrages committed by those unprovoked invaders, they abandoned their habitations, and, for some time, made but a feeble resistance to their persecutors. At length the people collected, and appeared in arms under their prince; and in a short time De Courcy was doomed to trace back his sanguinary steps with mortification, and give up those places which his cruelty had desolated. Such were the persecutions of De Courcy, that Vivian, the pope's legate, who accompanied this English leader to Ireland, and was the bearer of the bull for its annexation to England, could no longer restrain his indignation, and boldly stimulated the Irish to fly to their arms. An Irish army was immediately collected, and marched against De Courcy; who, depending on the discipline and experience of his troops, advanced to meet the tumultuous Irish forces. The northern Irish fought many severe and obstinate battles, before they yielded to the superior skill of the English general. In one of those, Murtough O'Carrol, chieftain of Oriel, or Louth, particularly distinguished himself. He attacked De Courcy in his camp, and almost destroyed his entire force, within his own entrenchments. While John de Courcy was thus wasting the beautiful province of Ulster with fire and sword, Milo de Cogan marched into Connaught, to support the rebellion of Murrrough, son of Roderic O'Connor. Such was the dreadful impression which these visits of the English adventurers made on the Irish mind

that on the approach of Milo de Cogan, the inhabitants drove away the cattle, secreted their most valuable effects, and reduced their country to a desert. It was the practice of the Irish to deposite provisions in their churches, where, amidst all their domestic quarrels, they lay secure, as in a sanctuary. To the English those consecrated temples were not more sacred nor more respected than any other place where treasure might be secreted—all were indiscriminately destroyed. The Irish of the west determined to anticipate the fury of their invaders. They prostrated their churches, destroyed the property they could not carry away, and left the country to be invaded without human sustenance or shelter. This policy succeeded—the English were compelled to a mortifying and disgraceful retreat. They abandoned their ally, Murrough, to an ignominious fate, and regained their quarters in Dublin, after an unsuccessful effort to plunder an unoffending people.

Nothing can so much excite the indignation of an honest or feeling heart, as the insolent reflections of the English historians, on the miserable feuds and animosities which, they say, disgraced all parts of this most devoted country. “Even,” say they, “the presence of the invading enemy could not unite those infatuated people: it could not obliterate the impressions of domestic jealousy, and family rivalship.” May it not be asked, what so calculated to keep alive those distracting divisions, as the hope of foreign support to domestic treachery; what so much as the distribution of foreign

gold, the artifices of foreign policy, the intrigues of English fraud, and the insatiable ambition of English adventurers? What treacherous or rebellious child could not find an asylum in the arms of an English general? Or what bad or malignant passion would not the breath of English ambition blow into a flame, when such a policy extended the triumphs of their arms, increased the wealth of their families, and gratified the ambition of their monarch? It is not to be wondered that we should see so much treachery, and so much mutual bloodshed; that father and son should draw their swords against each other, and that the nobler virtues of humanity should have been lost in the conflict of those malignant passions which found protection and encouragement in the destructive policy of England. Much better had the sword annihilated every Irish arm which was willing to defend the liberties of the country, than to wade through centuries of a lingering struggle, in which nothing is to be seen but courage betrayed on one side, and ambition sanguinary and insatiable on the other; an innocent and brave people contending for their families, their properties, their altars, and their liberties, against the unprincipled machinations of English adventurers, whose motive was plunder, whose pretext was religion and social order, and whose achievements were marked with the bravery of the midnight robber, who exposes his life to satiate his passions, and estimates his heroism by the atrocity of his courage, and the fearless contempt of the laws of God, and civilized society. Such are the reflec-

tions which must occur to every mind, not rendered callous by corruption, or not sacrificing his conviction to the hired purposes of the moment at which he is writing the history of his country.

The complaints against the viceroy Fitzansdelm, having reached the ears of Henry, the latter removed him from the government of Ireland. Hugh de Lacy was appointed to succeed the late viceroy ; an active and vigorous officer, well calculated to extend the power of his master.

His administration was marked with a spirit of equity, to which the Irish were unaccustomed since England first invaded their shores. It atoned, in some degree, for the violence and injustice of those who preceded him. In this year (1178) Henry constituted his son John, lord of Ireland : this prince never assumed any other title. He also made grants of large portions of Irish territory to his principal generals. The power with which John was now invested by his father, seemed to supersede the treaty made by Henry with the Irish monarch, and John was now what Roderic stipulated to be. The adventurers to whom Henry had made large grants of Irish territory, were resisted, when endeavouring to take possession of them. The present possessors were unconscious of any act which could justify the English monarch to expel them from their properties. They therefore unanimously resisted the bold and despotic order, and compelled their despoilers to the surrender of claims so unjust and so indefensible. The mild spirit of Hugh de Lacy's administration was not very congenial to the

feelings of his English companions in arms; and secret whispers and calumnious insinuations were communicated to Henry against the fidelity and allegiance of the viceroy. Hugh de Lacy was recalled; but, on investigation, the charge against his administration was found to be malicious and unfounded, and Henry immediately restored him to power. While Hugh de Lacy was endeavouring, by the mild and efficient measures of a humane and equitable system, to preserve the English power in Leinster, De Courcy was desolating Ulster with fire and sword.—The Irish exhibited in their battles with the English leaders, an heroism worthy of men fighting for their liberties and properties; and under Murtough O'Carrol, reduced De Courcy and his veteran troops to the most disastrous extremities. The English government succeeded in keeping alive, throughout the south and west, the most desperate spirit of faction among the principal Irish families, and thus conquered by division with more effect than by the sword. According to Henry's treaty with the Irish monarch, the former was bound to support him against his rebellious vassals. Such a policy, however, would have been considered but little calculated to extend the English power; and we therefore see the opportunity warmly cherished by Henry, to widen the breach between Roderic and his subjects, and thus take advantage of divisions which must ultimately extinguish the country.—About this period (1181) died Laurence O'Toole, the prelate of Dublin; a man illustrious for his conscientious hatred of English oppression;

his unconquerable spirit in defence of his country; his enthusiastic attachment to her interests; his honest indignation at the calamities with which she was afflicted; and his unwearied efforts to obtain justice for her wrongs, and punishment against her persecutors.—When he was obliged by force to submit to the English monarch, his sympathy for the sufferings of his country did not diminish; he frequently remonstrated against the practices of his English subjects, and at length appealed to the council of Lateran against the persecutions of England. So formidable were his representations, that Henry would not suffer him to return to his native land. He was succeeded in the archbishopric of Dublin by an Englishman, named John Comyn; a man, it may be anticipated, remarkable for qualities of an opposite character to the humane and lamented O'Toole. While the English historians feel gratification in relating those circumstances of our history, calculated to humble the Irish character, and while they anxiously seize the pen to paint those scenes in which Irish vengeance frequently gained the ascendancy over the native benignity of the Irish heart—be it my office to set down those anecdotes which elevate my countrymen, and record those characters who command the veneration of posterity. It is a source of melancholy reflection, that a modern Irish historian * of talents is to be found, and living in an age of liberality and refinement, to echo those tales which were fabricated, perhaps, by malice; or which, if ever they had any

* Mr Leland.

foundation in fact, may be palliated by the exasperations with which this devoted people were cruelly visited.

The most determined calumniator of the Irish character now came to Ireland by order of Henry, as the adviser and historian to his son John, who, created Lord of Ireland, was immediately to follow. This celebrated historian of falsehood and malignity, Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald Barry, inflated with all the pride of the conqueror, and the more disgusting petulance of the pedagogue, came to Ireland with the predetermined purpose of mocking and insulting the misery the arms of his master had inflicted. We find him constantly engaged in the most irritating controversies with the Irish clergy, wounding their patriotic feelings by his arrogance, and insulting them by his menaces—yet this is the authority which some Irish historians will follow, when writing the history of the English invasion of Ireland.

Ireland was now about to be sacrificed to another whim of the English monarch. He again removed De Lacy from the government, and substituted Philip de Braosa, or Philip of Worcester : a man of furious and vindictive temper, voracious and insatiable, whose object was plunder, and whose means to obtain it were fraud and violence. The Irish clergy were the victims of his avarice, and their churches the object of his unlimited rapacity. The governor was at length obliged to surrender his administration to young prince John, son of the English monarch ; who, being knighted by his

father, proceeded to Ireland with a train of Norman courtiers, and dissolute and abandoned bankrupt adventurers, who, desperate in their fortunes, transported themselves to Ireland, as the last refuge from the persecutions of their difficulties. Glenvil, the celebrated lawyer, also accompanied prince John. The royal retinue arrived at Waterford in the latter end of the year 1185, when they were received with the accustomed hospitality of the Irish. The courtly and delicate companions of the young prince, astonished at the foreign and warlike appearance of their Irish visitors, indiscriminately yielded to those sentiments of contempt and abhorrence which the savage would have excited. They thoughtlessly practised on the Irish chieftains, of whose hospitality they were partaking, the most insulting indignities. Such treatment roused the Irish to furious courage, and had the extraordinary effect of extinguishing the voice of faction, obliterating domestic jealousies, and uniting every heart and arm of the country.

The flame of national resentment spread through every county, and one unanimous determination prevailed, to liberate Ireland from the insolent oppressors of their rights. The English were attacked in all their strongest positions, and the most signal ravage inflicted on the violators of the national pride of Ireland. Thus the administration of this inexperienced and insolent prince had nearly destroyed the hopes of England, when Henry ordered De Courcy to take into his hands the reins of administration. Hugh de Lacy fell a victim

about this period, to the knife of the assassin, who, historians say, was found among his own countrymen; and it may be truly said, that the wisdom of his mercy did more to extend the English power in Ireland, than the most determined valour of Henry's best generals. De Courcy was considered by the British monarch best qualified to succeed De Lacy. The whole country was now torn with civil war; the fury of faction facilitating the progress of the invader's sword.

The Irish monarch, unable and unwilling to make any further efforts in stemming the torrent which threatened to sweep away every vestige of Ireland's glory, retired, in despondency and sorrow, to the solitude and protection of a convent. His unnatural children triumphed over an indulgent father, and the nominal sovereignty of Ireland was doomed again to be disputed by the most furious competition.

The viceroy endeavoured to take advantage of the feuds of the Irish, and confidently and incautiously marched his forces into Connaught. Such a step had the effect of uniting the Irish chieftains of the West, who assembled their forces, and compelled the viceroy to measure back his hasty and imprudent steps. De Courcy lost his most distinguished officers in this rash adventure.

This victory over the English, if followed up, would have annihilated their power in Ireland; but the victories of the Irish were almost always the sources of new divisions among themselves, and of new hopes to their enemies. Party spirit destroy-

ed the spirit of perseverance, overthrew the operations of system, and rendered it impossible for the most undaunted heroism to complete an achievement, always bravely commenced. Such was the situation of Ireland when Henry died.

The character of this monarch, as far as that character can be drawn from his conduct towards Ireland, may be described in a very few words ;—cruel, and humane, according to the expediency of either to promote his speculations of conquest. As the extension of his power in Ireland was the grand object of his ambition, he little considered the morality and integrity of the means by which he was to obtain its possession. He was careless about the reproaches of the humane or the just, and deaf to every monitor, but that which could facilitate his conquests, and minister to his avarice of plunder. The cries of an unoffending and innocent nation reached his ears in vain. He answered those cries by the sword, or by fraud ; and heard the accusation of the usurper and destroyer of Irish rights without compassion, and without pity, even in those parts of Ireland which submitted to his arms.

We have seen that the English monarch practised towards his English subjects the same duplicity, and the same cunning, which distinguishes his first operations in Ireland. He deprived his English colony of the administration of De Lacy, because it was mild and merciful, and parental ; and he substituted De Courcy, because he was cruel, and vindictive, and unprincipled. The same appre-

hensions which Henry's successors have always entertained least Irishmen should be united, operated on the mind of Henry against the union of the first English settlers in Ireland. The adventurers who first devoted their lives and fortunes to the conquest of Ireland, he discouraged ; and changed his governors and generals, whenever he suspected they had obtained the confidence of the Irish, either by their courage, or their wisdom. A model of the same unprincipled and varying system of politics which has distinguished the English government in their administration of Irish affairs for the last century, may be found in the uncertain policy of Henry towards his English colony.

Giraldus Cambrensis, Mathew Paris, and a crowd of defamers of the Irish character, labour to prove that the treaty between Henry and Roderic amounted to the conquest of Ireland ; and that when the Irish monarch volunteered in becoming the tributary of Henry, he surrendered his Irish crown, and became the subject of England. " The calumny can be best replied to," says the ingenious Dr Campbell, " by taking into consideration the difference between subjects and tributaries. A tributary is not a subject, but a vassal who stipulates to pay tribute, and perhaps do homage and swear fealty to a superior power, that he may live in peace. A sovereign may be tributary to a more potent sovereign, without obeying any of his ordinances ; that is, he may acknowledge his own inferiority by these tokens of submission, yet retain his sovereignty over his subjects, without owning any other

duty to his liege lord." This was precisely the case of Ireland before Henry set foot in this kingdom, and after he departed from it. The provincial kings paid tribute to the monarch, and the subordinate toparchs to the provincial kings, without any diminution of their jurisdiction over their respective subjects.

. Roderic the monarch did not submit to Henry during his stay in Ireland; but in a year or two after he volunteered to do homage, and swear fealty, and resigned by deed the sovereignty of certain districts, that he might enjoy the remainder. This is placed beyond doubt by the "*Finis et Concordia*," that final agreement made between them at Windsor, wherein it is expressly stipulated, that except in those districts he had surrendered, the jurisdiction of Roderic was to remain undiminished over the rest of the island, "*totam illam terram*," and "*habitationes terræ habeat subse*." Thus was Roderic pledged to make the vassal princes pay their tribute to himself, and through his hand it was to be conveyed to Henry: so that Roderic no more ceased to be monarch of Ireland, than he did to be king of Connaught. To those who have read the triumphant arguments of Mr Molyneaux, in his inestimable tract, called "The Case of Ireland," or the fourth Drapier's letter, by our immortal countryman Swift, little need be urged to demonstrate the fallacy and folly of the assertion that Henry II. conquered the kingdom of Ireland.

We have devoted more time to the reign of Henry II. than such a work as the present would, per-

haps, have warranted; but, as the circumstances which crowd the reign of this monarch are, for the most part, re-acted in many of the reigns which are to follow, and as the policy acted upon by the first English invaders of Ireland has been industriously imitated by his successors, it was deemed useful and instructive to detail more particularly the events of a reign which opened a scene of misery and distraction to Ireland, which even the lapse of six hundred years has not yet terminated.*

* "Had it not been," says Sir William Temple, "for circumstances prejudicial to the increase of trade and riches in a country, and which seem natural, or at least, to have been ever incident to the government of Ireland, the native fertility of the Irish soil and seas, in so many rich commodities, improved by a multitude of people and industry, with the advantage of so many excellent havens, and a situation so commodious for all foreign trade, must needs have rendered the kingdom one of the richest in Europe, and made a mighty increase both of strength and revenue to the Crown of England."

"Ireland," says Mr Brown, an intelligent writer in the commencement of the last century, "is, in respect of its situation, the number of its commodious harbours, and the natural wealth which it produces, the fittest island to acquire riches of any in the European seas. For, as by its situation, it lies the most commodious for the West Indies, so it is not only supplied by nature with all the necessaries of life, but can, over and above, export large quantities to foreign countries, inasmuch that had it been mistress of a free trade, no nation in Europe of its extent could in an equal number of years acquire greater wealth." Such is the testimony of the greatest enemies, as well as the best friends of Ireland, yet how abused have been the bounties of God!

The friends of Ireland, and the ardent supporters of British connection, credulously hoped that the year 1782 would have been the commencement of an era of peace and happiness, and

independence to their country, and of harmony and strength to the empire :—that the two countries, united by a free constitution, would also be united in mutual affection and respect ; that the wealth and prosperity of each would have been considered the wealth and prosperity of both ; that all further causes of jealousy were removed, and that one common sentiment of sincere attachment to the English constitution would have pervaded all parts of the empire.

These hopes, however just and reasonable, were doomed to be frustrated by the presiding genius of discord, which has perpetually governed English counsels with regard to Ireland. The confidence reposed by the Catholic in the liberality of his Protestant fellow-citizen, the growing prosperity of the country, alarmed the avaricious and contracted policy of the British cabinet, and Ireland was again doomed to be the victim of schemes of oppression, and new arrangements of cunning and insincerity.

Irishmen were again to be divided, in order to be plundered of their liberty, secured to them by the pledged faith of England ; and the Union was to be the closing act of that bloody tragedy which extinguished our freedom. Irishmen of rank and property were to be seen carried down the stream of British deception, and idly and infamously administering to the views and the stratagems of the English minister, conspirators against their own consequence, and the degraded betrayers of the rights and character of their country. The policy of Mr Pitt was not more liberal than the policy of Henry II., and the same frauds and violence which were practised against Ireland in the 12th, were acted over again, with equal malignity and success, in the 18th century.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

RICHARD I.

THE reign of Richard I. was too much devoted to prosecution of the holy wars, which, at this period, almost depopulated Europe; and this monarch was so distinguished as the great and illustrious leader of those fanatical and destructive expeditions, we are not to wonder that we find him not only regardless of his own country, but completely indifferent to his Irish dominions, and to that authority which his brother John continued to exercise therein.

The deputies appointed to govern in Ireland, were chosen by John; and the style and title always assumed by the latter, was Earl of Morton and Lord of Ireland. To Dublin, he gave new franchises and increased immunities, and the same scene which has wearied our eyes in the last reign, presents itself again to us in the present, the build-

ing of churches in one part, while plunder and devastation are making their baneful progress in another—the destruction of Irish convents and monasteries, and the erection of new convents and monasteries, with English monks devoted to the English interests.

We find the authority of John solely confined to those parts immediately possessed by the Irish. Satisfied with the exercise of those safe duties of raising monasteries and forts in various parts of his Irish dominions, John retired to England, and entrusted his Irish administration to the younger De Lacy; an appointment which excited the jealousy and resentment of the late viceroy, De Courcy. This indignant English baron retired to Ulster, separated from his countrymen, and determined to confine himself to the promotion of his own personal interest and ambitious views, unaided and unsupported by England. Such was the weakness of the English government, that they were unable to punish the rebellion of De Courcy, or restrain the dangerous spirit of rivalry which, at this period, distinguished the British adventurers.

A new and powerful enemy arose in the west of Ireland, animated with the vindictive spirit of his family, and an ardent ambition for military glory: He vowed the most implacable vengeance against the English, who had desolated with fire and sword the fairest and most fertile parts of Ireland, and were then threatening to reduce the entire country to a degrading subjection.—This formidable Irish chieftain was named CATHAL THE BLOODY-HANDED.

Possessed of all those qualities which could recommend him to a brave people, they followed Cathal to the field with confidence, and obeyed him with alacrity. De Courcy, alarmed at the progress of this furious and vindictive Irish chieftain, ordered his friend and adviser, Armoric of St Laurence, to march without delay and join his forces. Armoric being obliged to pass through a part of Cathal's territories, was intercepted; and, after a furious engagement, in which he and his troops peculiarly distinguished themselves, his brave though small detachment was annihilated. This partial defeat was the signal for universal insurrections and confederacies among the Irish; and the misery of the nation was peculiarly aggravated by a destructive fire, which, at this period, consumed the greater part of Dublin. Cathal the bloody-handed, animated by the late triumph of his arms, roused the surrounding chieftains to the assertion of their country's rights; and Daniel O'Brien, prince of Thomond, gained an important victory over the English at Thurles.

The arms of this celebrated chieftain were at length repulsed, and his territories, with those of the prince of Desmond, were over-run by the English, who, in their progress, practised the most barbarous cruelties. They put out the eyes of the young prince of Thomond, and tearing his brother from the sanctuary in which he concealed himself, they put him to a cruel and lingering death. Cathal, the king of Connaught, took ample and immediate vengeance on the enemies of his country.

He entered Munster at the head of a powerful army, ravaged the English castles, drove the English army before him, and, had he followed up his victory, would perhaps have expelled those adventurers from Ireland. But such was not to be the Irish destiny. For her, the Irish hero seemed to be born in vain. The victories of a province or a county, were considered by the bravest and most renowned Irish chieftain as the victory of Ireland, and the expulsion of the English from their respective territories, satisfied the vengeance, and completed the ambition of the Irish chiefs. Cathal, content with this partial defeat of his enemies, retired to his kingdom of Connaught, and thus disappointed the hopes and expectations of the nation. The English had no sooner restored the castles and forts which Cathal had destroyed, and repaired the injuries which his armies had inflicted on their territories, than they were again attacked by MacCarthy of Desmond, who drove them out of Limerick, and twice baffled their efforts to recover this important station. Cork, the best and most considerable port in Munster now occupied by the English, would have fallen into the hands of the Irish, had it not been for the fatal jealousies which existed between the rival Irish chieftains, Cathal, the king of Connaught, and O'Laughlin, chief of the ancient house of the northern Hi-Nial. The military fame of Cathal awoke the envy of the northern prince, whose pride of genealogy was insulted by the acknowledged superiority of his ally in arms. He contrived, therefore, by a secret in

trigue with MacCarty, to raise the siege of Cork, and the fate of the second strongest English settlement in Ireland was for the present suspended. At length, in want of provision, and hopeless of succour, this brave garrison surrendered to the prince of Desmond. Nothing can demonstrate the miserable weakness of the English government in Ireland at this period more than the feeble efforts that were made to preserve the most important places in the kingdom. Notwithstanding the infatuated divisions which distracted the councils of the Irish chieftains, the English suffered themselves to be deprived of all those conquests, which cost them so much treasure in the acquisition.

Hamo de Valois was now (1197) appointed viceroy of Ireland. The English interest, since the invasion, was never weaker than at this moment—even the province of Leinster was with difficulty maintained. Hamo had recourse to the only measure which he thought calculated to restore the arms and strength of England. He seized the lands granted to the see of Dublin; plundered the Irish, whose properties were considerable, under the protecting plea of necessity; accumulated all the treasure his rapacity could embrace.—Comyn, the English archbishop, expostulated against this act of usurpation, in loud and bitter lamentations; threatened the denunciations of the church, and appealed to the British monarch, and the lord of Ireland for redress. Comyn appealed in vain. Richard and John were deaf to his entreaties; but in some years after, Hamo de Valois gave to the arch-

bishop some compensation for the property of which he was despoiled. During this scene of disaster, Roderic, the Irish monarch, died in the monastery of Cong, where he resided for twelve years in the peace and tranquillity of a pious solitude. Were we to regulate our opinions of the character of Roderic by the estimation in which his country held him, we should describe him as a great warrior, a humane and tender prince, possessing all those good and amiable qualities which are calculated to inspire us with reverence and affection; but looking back to the history of the events which we have been relating, it is not easy to discern those distinguishing characteristics for which the Irish annalists have celebrated him. It should be admitted, however, that great allowances are to be made for the distraction of mind created by the unnatural rebellion of his own children, as well as by the nature of the authority which the constitution of his country enabled him to exercise over those provincial sovereigns whom he brought out to the field with him, uncertain in their allegiance, and whimsical in their support of the common cause. The virtues of the monarch were often sacrificed to the painful peculiarity of his situation; and during this struggle with England, we have often as much cause to commiserate the distress of an amiable mind, as we have to applaud its undaunted spirit, and indefatigable exertion for the independence of Ireland. The last hours of his long life were somewhat cheered by the reflection, that at length a hero amidst the distractions of his family, whose genius promised to

obliterate the disgraceful impressions of the past, by the glorious achievements of the future ; and the Irish monarch, in his ninety-ninth year, sunk into the grave, consoled and comforted by the hope, that Cathal was destined by Providence to restore the liberty and pride of his country, and to exterminate the foreign invader, who struggled to enslave it. In this year also, died the English monarch, to whom John, the lord of Ireland, succeeded, bringing with him to the English throne, those rights over Ireland with which he had been invested.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

JOHN.

THE first act of the British monarch, when he came to the throne, was to yield to the complaints of his Irish subjects, against the oppression of his viceroy, Hamo de Valois, who was amassing considerable wealth from the plunder of the clergy and laity under his immediate jurisdiction. He was succeeded by Meyler Fitzhenry, natural son of Henry I. and one of the most distinguished barons who had originally adventured into Ireland.

Hugh de Lacy, and John de Courcy, two of the most powerful of the English settlers in Ireland, had for some time assumed a state of complete independence of the English monarch. De Courcy impeached the title of John to the English crown, asserted the claims of Arthur, and boldly renounced his allegiance to England. Philip de Burgo, to whom John, when lord of Ireland, made a grant of Limerick, proceeded to form a settlement in

Munster, which threatened the destruction of Cathal's authority in the kingdom of Connaught.

Cathal, from whose arms and valour so much was expected by the Irish, fell a victim to the intriguing practices of his enemies, and the artful conspiracy of Carragh O'Connor, a prince of his blood, who made overtures to Philip de Burgo, and with his co-operation expelled Cathal from his dominions, and took possession of the royal dignity of Connaught. Such a revolution was heard with astonishment, and Cathal fled to O'Nial of Tyrone for protection against the arms of the usurper. A confederacy was immediately formed to effect the restoration of Cathal; and it is worthy of observation, that, in this confederation, we see the English lords, De Courcy and De Lacy, engaged with O'Nial, to assert the claims of Cathal against the usurpations of Carragh O'Connor, supported by the arms of another English lord, Philip de Burgo. So various and so conflicting were the interests of parties and factions in Ireland, and so reduced the English power, that Englishmen are to be seen shedding the blood of Englishmen in the cause of the rival chieftains of Ireland.

Battles were fought by those contending factions with various success, till at length victory declared in favour of the usurper, Carragh O'Connor, and Philip de Burgo. O'Nial was deposed by his subjects, and the powers of De Burgo were greatly increased by the triumph of his arms. He also forgot his allegiance to his sovereign, and made war and peace by his proper authority. He laid waste

the territories of Desmond, and obliged many of the neighbouring chieftains to pay him tribute.

The deposed Cathal having succeeded in separating Philip de Burgo from his alliance with the usurper, Carragh O'Connor, and supported by the arms of the English baron, recovered his kingdom of Connaught. Cathal returned the services of Philip de Burgo with the basest ingratitude; he refused to perform his promises of large and valuable accessions of territory, which he made to the English baron, when pressed by adverse fortune; and the latter having recourse to arms, to enforce Cathal's adherence to his engagements, was obliged to make a dishonourable retreat.

In the mean time the viceroy, Meyler Fitzhenry, having raised a considerable force, determined to reduce to subjection those English barons, who had appeared in arms against his royal master. He proceeded first to Limerick, against De Burgo; and the sword of the viceroy was no sooner unsheathed, than the king of Connaught, and O'Brien of Thomond, immediately made him a tender of their services; prompted more by the mean desire to humble the common enemy, Philip de Burgo, than intimidated by the threats or the arms of Meyler Fitzhenry. Limerick was besieged, and Philip de Burgo, having no hopes of making an efficient resistance, surrounded on all sides by his enemies, capitulated to the viceroy. Cathal's submission to the British monarch on this occasion was most important; being no less than two parts of his kingdom of Connaught, absolutely, and to pay one hun-

dred marks for the other part. The spirit of resistance to king John, which at this period distinguished the English barons in England, animated with equal zeal the bosoms of their countrymen in Ireland ; they were equally indignant at his oppression and his cruelty. The Baron de Courcy, yielding to the natural sincerity of his character, loudly exclaimed against his sovereign. Hugh de Lacy, more artful, suppressed his indignation ; and, affecting a zealous loyalty, gave secret information of the thoughtless and hasty expressions of his countryman. John summoned De Courcy to appear before him.—De Courcy treated the summons with contempt.—De Lacy was ordered by his sovereign to reduce this refractory vassal to obedience. The result of the various battles fought by those English barons was the submission of De Courcy, on condition of obtaining a safe conduct to England. A romantic and idle tale is told of the feats and achievements of this celebrated English adventurer. He was condemned by king John to perpetual imprisonment ; and, as English historians relate, was released from prison to enter the lists with a champion of Philip, king of France, whom that monarch sent to England to assert his master's claim to Normandy ; or, as others say, to some castle of this province. The stern aspect, the enormous giant-size, the notorious strength of De Courcy, are said to have alarmed the French champion, who declined the combat, and fled into Spain. He exhibited before the English monarch extraordinary proofs of bodily strength, for which he obtained his liberty,

and regained the possession of his extensive properties. John further granted to De Courcy, and to his heirs, the privilege of standing covered in their first audience with the king of England. Upon the death of this celebrated baron, the earldom of Ulster was conferred by John upon Hugh de Lacy. The latter, with the viceroy, Meyler Fitzhenry, were about this period called over to England to defend their monarch against the increasing combinations of his enemies. In addition to the numberless embarrassments by which the British king was pressed, he was also involved in a contest with the pope, relative to the election of the prelate of Armagh. The Irish clergy, encouraged by the Roman pontiff, proceeded to elect a countryman of their own, Eugene, as successor to Thomas O'Connor, late prelate of Armagh. The king forbade his Irish subjects to acknowledge Eugene as the prelate, and sent forward the archdeacon of Meath to take possession of the see of Armagh. This contest continued a long time; till, at length, it is written, that the king, soothed by a present of 300 marks of silver, and 100 of gold, consented that Eugene should be invested with all the rights of the see. The exemplary character of Eugene, his great virtues, and well-merited popularity, contributed more particularly to establish his election, than the pre-eminence of papal authority, or the corruption of the English monarch. However the latter may have come in aid of the prayers of the nation, they cannot be considered the leading

causes of the victory obtained over the pride and passions of the British sovereign.

The English interest, in the south and west of Ireland, was now (1208) considerably established and secured by the active and efficient administration of the viceroy, Meyler Fitzhenry, and scarcely a power remained in Ireland sufficiently formidable to excite the reasonable apprehensions of the British monarch; but, anxious to enjoy the opportunity which would enable him to raise an army in England without offending his sturdy and independent barons, he affected to dread the growing power of the De Lacys; and, under the pretext of circumscribing their authority within reasonable bounds, marched an army into Ireland. The English monarch arrived in Dublin, in the year 1210; where not less than 20 Irish chieftains attended to do him homage. Hugh and Walter de Lacy fled to France. The Irish princes consented to pay tribute to John, but refused to invest him with their lands, resign their respective sovereignties, or accept the English laws. They always insisted upon the right of administering their own government, according to the Irish laws and customs; John brought with him the most celebrated lawyers of England; by whose counsel a regular code of laws was prepared and determined upon for Ireland, and deposited under the king's seal, in the exchequer of Dublin. The lands of Ireland, immediately in possession of the British monarch, were divided into counties, where sheriffs and other officers were appointed. Twelve counties were

established by John: Dublin, Meath, Kildare, Arghal (now called Louth), Katerlagh (now called Carlow), Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary.

- During the three months king John remained in Ireland he was, for the most part, engaged in assimilating its laws and jurisprudence to those of England; that the two countries might be governed by the same system of legislation, as well as the same monarch.

On the departure of John, the administration of Ireland was given to John de Grey, first Bishop of Norwich; who first caused money to be coined of the same weight with that of England; and by whose vigorous and firm regulations, the English colony were able to send a large force to the assistance of John when threatened by an invasion from the king of France. It would, perhaps, be more correct to attribute the undisturbed and peaceable state of the English power in Ireland, to the mild and conciliating policy which the English councils then adopted. They found, by experience, that little was to be obtained by violence; and that much had been sacrificed. John therefore ordered his viceroy to treat his feudaries, or those Irish chieftains who had submitted to do him homage, with all respect and attention; to protect them against their rebellious vassals; and as long as they demeaned themselves with loyalty to his government, to treat them with kindness and regard. Perhaps, in accounting for this unusual extension of royal benignity, we may be permitted to observe,

that the patriotic and successful struggles of the English barons against the unjust pretensions of their monarch, may have inclined the latter to court the allegiance of his Irish subjects by kind and parental concessions. The history of mankind demonstrates, that the liberties of a nation only rise as their governments have been weakened and humbled ; and that the people have always found the surest refuge in the adversity of the monarch. To protect the crown against the insolent and usurping demands of aristocracy, the former has had recourse to the people ; and the consequence of all has been usually promoted by the alternate rise and decline of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Cathal, the prince of Connaught, was thus protected by John against his vassals, and a present of costly robes was delivered by the viceroy to each Irish chieftain, as a mark of favour and protection. Some historians have supposed, that the object of the present was to seduce the Irish to the wearing of English attire, and to an assimilation of dress with that of the people to whom they were united. John was now engaged in that disgraceful and memorable transaction which stains his memory and country ; namely, his abject submission to the Pope, and his resignation of the kingdoms of England and Ireland to the see of Rome. In return for this act of national debasement, Pope Innocent addressed a letter to the prelates and princes of Ireland, commanding them, by his apostolical mandate, to persevere in their allegiance to the king and his heirs, who were now the objects

of his parental protection. The celebrated contest between the British monarch and his barons immediately followed these transactions; and the *Magna Charta*, or the great charter of English freedom, was signed by a reluctant king, in the presence of his armed subjects, at Runnimead. This sacred instrument, so deservedly the object of British veneration, gave freedom only to the clergy, the barons, and the gentry of England: it did not abolish slavery among the great body of the people. A long interval elapsed, before they enjoyed a free and impartial constitution.

On this memorable occasion, Ireland, (or rather the English colony in Ireland) was forgotten or unnoticed, nor was any concession obtained by the English barons in this country, until the commencement of the reign of Henry III., when we find them petitioning for the removal of those grievances, which they suffered so severely under the reign of his father, and a cessation of that violence, which he so wantonly practised, in the confiscation and plunder of their properties, the levying exorbitant taxes, and the practice of every mode of oppression which his avarice could suggest.

They also prayed that the queen-dowager, or the king's brother, should reside in Ireland. To this petition, a most gracious answer was given by Henry. He declared "*That the same liberties which have been granted to his subjects of England, shall be extended to his subjects in Ireland.*" Thus were the rights and privileges of the English colony in Ireland, or of those Irish who had submitted to

England, ascertained and confirmed. All the advantages of a free constitution, were hereafter to be enjoyed by the English colony, and their descendants, in as full and as ample a manner as their countrymen in England, who succeeded in their glorious struggles with their king for the assertion of human right, and laid the foundation in their great charter of the future glory and splendour of the English nation.—The English monarch at length fell a victim to the indignation of his insulted and injured subjects. It is said he died of a broken heart, after a useless and destructive struggle against the liberty of his country.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

HENRY III.

No event of importance took place in the first year of Henry III. (1216). The acknowledged vigour and ability of William Marshall, earl of Pembroke, who was appointed protector during the minority of Henry, prevented the recurrence of those distractions in the English colony, which we have witnessed in the reign of John, and which were high undermining the English interests in Ireland. The celebrated Henry de Londres, who was branded with the name of "Burn-Bill," was appointed coadjutor to Geoffry de Maurisco, in the administration of Ireland. He was also made archbishop of Dublin; and in his ecclesiastical, as well as political character, was remarkable for his insolence and tyranny. He summoned the tenants of his see to produce the instruments by which they held their lands; which he no sooner received, under the pretence of examining them, than, in an affect-

ed passion, he cast them into the fire. Hence the ignominious title of Burn-Bill, which ever adhered to him.

“A striking example,” says Mr Leland, “of the contempt with which the rights of the subject in Ireland were treated in those times, by the more powerful of the neighbouring kingdom.”

On the death of the earl of Pembroke, who possessed most extensive estates in Ireland, and whose character seemed to awe into silence and submission, the vicious passions of the colonists, Hugh de Lacy immediately laid claim to some lands held by that distinguished Englishman.

The son of the earl of Pembroke proceeded to Ireland, to defend his inheritance against de Lacy, and both, after wasting the territories of each other, and sacrificing the innocent inhabitants of Leinster and Meath, terminated their idle and sanguinary efforts by mutual concessions. In the meantime new rebellions sprung up in the country of the MacCartys, against whom the viceroy was obliged to draw the sword. Donald O'Brien, of Thomond, to defend himself against the Irish, on one side, and the English colonists on the other, petitioned, and obtained from Henry, a grant of the kingdom of Thomond, now called Clare, to be held of the English king, at a yearly rent of L.100, and a fine of 1000 marks.

This low and humble tribute seems to be rather the evidence of the homage which was to be rendered, than of the measure of value of the county conceded. Henry, at this period, also granted to

Richard de Burgo, the reversion of the whole kingdom of Connaught, on the decease of Cathal, the bloody-handed. With so little attention to justice were the poor people of this country handled, from one adventurer to another, to gratify* the avarice of a favourite, or appease the vengeance of an enemy. The death of the celebrated Cathal, gave Richard de Burgo an opportunity to plead the grant of his sovereign ; but the Irish would not depart from their old customs, and proceeded to elect a successor.

The prince of Ulster interposed, and assisted Turlough, the brother of Cathal, in the assertion of his right to the crown of Connaught. The vice-roy led an army into the latter kingdom ; and by the triumphs of his arms, substituted the son of Cathal in the sovereignty of the west. The encroachments of the colonists on the territories of this prince, established by their interposition, were so intolerable as to oblige him to take up arms. After a desolating struggle, he surrendered to the

* Notwithstanding the distractions with which the Irish mind must have been oppressed, during this melancholy predatory warfare, it is some consolation to find mention made of the great learning with which some of our countrymen were then distinguished. We meet in our annals many names eminent for the extent of their literature—among those was the celebrated Cornelius, called Historicus ; of whom Bale and Stanihurst make honourable mention. He was the great source from which future historians collected the materials of their work. His *Multarum rerum Chronicon*, is referred to by the old authors, English and Scotch, with the most implicit reliance on the soundness and fidelity of his statements.

viceroys. Fedlim, or Phelim, the second son of Cathal, succeeded his brother, and repelled, with dreadful effect, the struggles of the English to subdue him. The Irish prince* had recourse to an expedient, which strongly establishes the truth of the complaint, that the people of this country were eternally the victims of calumny: of a party interested in concealing the grievances under which they laboured; or, in magnifying the reasonable resistance of violated right into wanton rebellion, and causeless insurrection. Phelim, of Connaught,

* So true is the remark of Sir John Davis, "That the people of Ireland merited far different treatment from the Crown of England: for," he continues, "when they were admitted to the condition of subjects, they gave many signal proofs of their dutifulness and obedience; and would gladly continue in that condition, as long as they might be protected, and justly governed, without oppression on the one hand, or impunity on the other; there being, in his opinion, no nation under the sun that did love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish, or that would rest better satisfied with the execution thereof, although it were against themselves; so as they might have the protection and benefit of the law, when upon a just cause they did desire it."—"I dare affirm," says the same liberal and enlightened Englishman, who was Attorney-General to James I. "that for the space of five years last past, there have not been found so many malefactors, worthy of death, in all the six circuits of this realm, (Ireland,) which is now divided into thirty-six shires at large, as in one circuit of six shires, namely, the western circuit of England. For the truth is, that in times of peace, the Irish are more fearful to offend the law than the English, or any other nation whatever." Is not this a good lecture to those legislators who recommend the fiery decisions of martial law, in preference to the sober and impartial inquiry of a constitutional tribunal, whenever a disturbance exists, or a grievance is to be remedied.

addressed himself to the king of England, and represented in respectful and pathetic terms, the persecutions which his people had suffered from the representative of his majesty ; that he was driven, by injury, to rebellion ; that he was the victim of the avarice of his English subjects ; and that he challenged his enemies to an inquiry into the truth of the charges which he brought against them before the common parent of the colonists and the native Irish. So sad and so affecting a story excited the astonishment of Henry, who had been listening to exaggerated accounts of Irish treason ; to whom Phelim had been represented as the head and cause of an unnatural rebellion, without provocation or injury, laying waste the territories of his majesty's subjects, and exciting the people of Ireland to universal resistance. In answer to Phelim's humble petition, praying an interview with the British sovereign, the latter writes a letter to the viceroy, desiring him to inquire into the statement made by Phelim ; and to ascertain the real situation of Ireland. " To guard against deception," writes the English monarch, " be cautious of the channels through which you shall receive your informations ; let them be as impartial as possible to either party." The result of this application by Phelim, was, the peaceful settlement of the kingdom of Connaught, and the satisfaction of its plundered inhabitants. So easy is it for a spirit of justice to tranquillize the people of any nation, that no instance can be found in the history of Ireland, nor in the history of any other country, where the ho-

nest anxiety of the monarch, or the ruling powers, to do justice to their subjects, does not excite corresponding sentiments of gratitude, loyalty, and allegiance.*

The death of the son of the earl of Pembroke, which took place about this period, (1231), gave rise to a train of events which involved Ireland in new scenes of anarchy and confusion.

Richard, the second son of that illustrious nobleman, succeeded to the princely inheritance of his brother; and possessed that bold and independent spirit, which distinguished the life of his illustrious predecessor. Such qualities incurred the suspicion, and excited the fears of the king; and every artifice which the most malignant ingenuity could suggest to remove so formidable an enemy, was practised by the insidious prelate of Winchester, who was then the minister of England. Earl Richard remonstrated against the insolent and violent usurpations of this minister; and particularly expostulated with his sovereign on the alarming increase of foreigners in every part of the state; he absent,

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* Notwithstanding the long continuance of tragic scenes, in a land violently torn by all the horrors of anarchy and oppression, it may be some relief to the mind to reflect, that strong traces of erudition are to be discovered. Joannes de S. Bosco has been claimed for Ireland, by Ware, Harris, and Abbe Groghegan. He wrote a Treatise on the Sphere; on the Calculation of the Ecclesiastical Year; a Breviary of Law. He died at Paris, in 1256, where he was long a highly-esteemed professor. Florence MacFlin, chancellor of the church of Tuam, is another celebrated name in the Irish annals; he was remarkable for his knowledge of canon law,

ed himself from parliament ; and at length flew to arms in defence of his country. This being an insurrection against an odious minister, rapidly acquired strength ; and, at length, a treacherous and cowardly conspiracy was formed against the spirited and gallant Richard. By this stratagem the large estates of this English baron, in Ireland, were divided among the rapacious settlers in that country. A price was put on his head, and every inducement held out to encourage the infidelity of his followers.—He fell a victim to the treason of his friends. The information of his fall, drew from the king tears of the most degrading hypocrisy ; and the universal sympathy in favour of the betrayed and beloved baron, extorted even from his enemies the affectation of sorrow for his untimely and unworthy fate. So great was the popular sentiment in favour of his memory, that the king, in all the meanness of hypocrisy and terror, yielded to the public indignation ; and the death of this illustrious Englishman, had the effect of accomplishing what the triumphs of his arms could only have achieved, namely, the banishment of those foreigners which had monopolized all the places of profit and confidence under the crown, and the total annihilation of that fabric, which the ambition and the obstinacy of the bishop of Winchester had so lately raised. The people of Ireland sympathized with the friends of Richard, earl of Pembroke, and the people of Leinster, laying claim to the honour of being governed by the family of the earl of Pembroke, manifested

the most ardent zeal against the murderers of their prince.

Soon after the death of Richard, earl of Pembroke, Fedlim, or Phelim, prince of Connaught, presented himself before his sovereign, to complain of the grievances under which he and his people laboured from Richard de Burgo. His complaints were heard with respect, and immediately attended to by the king.—Orders were issued to suppress the outrages of the baron de Burgo, who was the oppressor of his Irish subjects. This act of justice by the English monarch is a good deal diminished in value by the royal conquest which immediately followed. It appears as the result of royal policy, more than of royal mercy; and discovers the arts of the politician, more than the protection of the sovereign.

Henry immediately summoned the prince of Connaught, in return for the protection he afforded the Irish, to assist him against the king of Scotland.

We find Fedlim soon after leading his troops into Wales, against David, and co-operating with the Irish viceroy to reduce the Welsh. The deaths of Richard de Burgo, Hugh de Lacy, and Geoffry de Maurisco, became new sources of national distraction and misery. The disorders and calamities of England gave opportunities to the ambition of the English adventurers in Ireland; and the native Irish, amidst the contending great families, were the common * victims of ambition, jealousy and

* The following observations are made by an Irish historian (Mr Taaffe,) who discovers in every page of his work, an ardent

avarice. The reader of the scenes just related, cannot suppress his smiles at the stories so gravely told by the apologists of England, of the two mandates which were issued by king Henry, directing that the nobility, knights, freeholders, and bailiffs of the several counties, should be convened, in order that

sensibility to the sufferings, and an honest anxiety for the fame of his countrymen. "It is surprising the incessant din of arms did not entirely banish the muses from this ill-fated island; but it seems the person of a bard was held more sacred than that of a priest. The English settlers frequently plundered and massacred the clergy; while we find few or no instances of similar cruelty exercised on the children of the muses. In addition to the high respect entertained for their profession, ambition was interested in their protection. They were, in a great measure, arbiters of fame; and the murder of one of their body would inflame the whole irritable race of poets and harpers, to consign the perpetrator to the execration of posterity. Sensible that character forms one species of power, the chief of the settlers not only avoided insulting men possessed of such influence on public opinion, but he kept pensioned bards to sound and extend his credit: at his command they sounded the war song, inveighed against his enemies, extolled his success in collecting their spoils, and praised the munificence with which he shared the fruits of his victories among his followers. In the book of Fermoy, there remains a curious collection of such mercenary rhapsodies, composed by Roche's bards. In those times of anarchy, they were generally employed as trumpeters of war, and served, by their melodious notes, and rapturous strains, to attract enthusiastic youth to the standard of the chief, and to influence their ardour in the day of battle."—For 600 years, the enemies of Ireland have found their mercenary poets and historians to sing their praises, and conceal their tyranny; and to the hour in which this line is writing, may we see the interests and happiness of Ireland sacrificed to the mercenary poverty of some despicable calumniator, whose only hope of decent existence is his sycophancy to the worst passion of an avaricious monopoly.

the great charter should be read over in their presence ; and that they should be directed to adhere to the laws and customs received from king John, and strictly to obey them ; that the Anglo-Irish barons be requested to permit Ireland to be governed by the laws of England ; and that peace should at length be restored to that unfortunate country.

May it not be permitted us to ask, at this distant period of time, how it came to pass, that the power which was able to extinguish the efforts of those barons, whenever they rebelled against the English interests, was so feeble and so petitioning, when the object of its interposition was the peace and happiness of Ireland ? May it not be conjectured, without any great stretch of sagacity, that the English government connived at the extortions and the plunder of the colonists, in order the more effectually to compel the devoted inhabitants of Ireland to solicit the royal interposition, in terms sufficiently humiliating to the national pride ; and thus obtain, by the slow and lingering torments of continued persecution, those advantages which could not, perhaps, be won in the field ?

In this view of the subject, we shall not be surprised when we see Henry *humbly suing* for the permission of his barons ; or some of the persecuted people of Ireland petitioning, in turn, for royal patents, by which they may enjoy the rights and privileges of English subjects. It is idle to talk of the obstinate resistance of the Irish to the English laws and customs, after perusing the history of national suffering we have already passed through, produ-

ced by English ambition and avarice. It is worse than idle, to express our wonder at the inflexible attachment of the Irish to their old laws and customs, under which they experienced the blessings of independence ; or to be surprised that they would close their eyes and their ears to the instruction of their *enlightened* invaders, who were desolating their beautiful country with fire and sword.

It is said that Henry, in order to repress the violence of his barons in Ireland, made the experiment of sending, as his representatives, a succession of Englishmen, who would have no interest to consult but that of their master, and the country to which they were sent. But such rapid successions always produce the miseries inseparable from distracted and conflicting councils ; and the wisdom and virtue of one viceroy, was counteracted by the folly or the vices of his successor.

An event of high importance occurred at this period (1253), which, if the circumstances of the English nation had permitted, might have been attended with the most fortunate consequences to Ireland. Prince Edward, the son of the English monarch, being married to the infanta of Spain, was invested by his royal father with the sovereignty of all that part of Ireland then under English dominion, excepting the cities and counties of Dublin, Limerick, and Athlone ; excepting also the lands of the church, on the proviso that the territories so granted should never be separated from the crown, but remain for ever to the kings of England. The lands, therefore, which were claimed, or possessed

by the king's subjects in Ireland, were called the lands of lord Edward, and all writs ran in this prince's name. Edward, from whose great talents much might have been expected, had he assumed the administration of Ireland, was carried down the current of the day, which ran so strongly in favour of the wild and adventurous expeditions of the crusades. Ireland, in the mean time, suffered all the calamities inseparable from a state of anarchy and civil war. The Fitzgeralds and the MacCartys desolated each other's territories, till at length the family of the Geraldines were completely destroyed, by one general engagement.

The English government were indolent or indifferent spectators of the sanguinary scene. The English monarch, as it is recorded, made no greater effort than to write to the rival combatants, commanding them to suspend their animosities. The miserable confusion which was created by those rival factions, generated death and disease in every part of Ireland.

The severity of the season aggravated the miseries of civil war; and the finest portion of the British dominions lay mangled and torn by the barbarity of the most rancorous feuds. In addition to the inflictions under which Ireland now suffered, we have to enumerate the insolent exactions of the papal authority, as well as of the English monarch.

Henry, whom we saw, some time back, lamenting the distraction of the kingdom of Ireland, we now find co-operating with the pope in levying exorbitant taxes on the beggary of the country—a

fifteenth of all the cathedral churches, and a sixteenth of all the ecclesiastical revenues, as well as the most intolerable taxes on the laity. Thus do we see this ill-fated country, in the extremity of her distress, resorted to by the English monarchy, to remunerate him for the loss he sustained in his foreign wars; and while Ireland is thus writhing under the miseries of English invasion, we are stopped by the historians of the colonists, to reflect on the singular want of judgment evinced by the Irish nation, in not embracing the laws and customs of England. Ireland was, at this period, as well as England, overrun with Italian ecclesiastics, who were invested with the dignities and revenues of the church, within the territories of the English powers. It is to be observed, that the oppressive exactions of the pope, and usurpations of the Italian ecclesiastics, were confined to the popish limits of English jurisdiction, and were effectually resisted by the native catholics. The native Irish, sensible of the abuse of the pope's spiritual authority, were little inclined to pay him tribute, or to submit to the insolent impositions of his foreign emissaries.

The Irish princes, who as yet retained their independence, scornfully rejected such encroachments as unchristian. The evils of this ecclesiastical tyranny became so oppressive to the colonists, that remonstrances crowded from every corner of the pale to the viceroy, against so destructive a practice. Thus unfortunate Ireland seemed to be doomed the resting-place for every greedy adven-

turer, lay and ecclesiastical, who pleased to fatten on her spoils, or plunder her of her property.

The native Irish came to a determination on this occasion, that no foreigner should be admitted or received into any of the Irish churches; and it should not be forgotten, that within the English pale alone, do we find the Italian, or foreign clergy, presume to obtrude themselves. It is a well ascertained fact, that the native Irish clergy preserved the most uninterrupted harmony with their countrymen, and that the exactions of which some historians speak, in those days, were practised solely by the English and Italian clergy, who had no other object but the enriching themselves, and the beggary of Ireland.

The native Irish exulted in the venerable antiquity of their church. They gloried in their catalogue of saints, and found consolation in the piety and sanctity of their clergy. They despised the English, as well as the Italian intruders on the peace and independence of their country; and though they bowed to the spiritual, they as firmly denied this temporal power, and repelled the exactions of papal authority, with as much boldness as they resisted the usurpations of the English adventurers. Such has been the religion of the Irish catholic for eighteen hundred years, during which period, we see numberless instances of the compatibility of that spiritual power of the pope, which the Irish acknowledge, with the political freedom of their country, and the most ardent allegiance to a Protestant government.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

EDWARD I.

THE

A. D.
1272. **HE** who has read the history of England, and who has observed the wisdom and policy of those regulations which Edward here introduced and enforced, will perhaps expect that the distractions of Ireland would have attracted the attention of so wise a monarch; and that some effort would have been made to heal those wounds, from which the life blood of the most valued member of the British dominions was so abundantly flowing. The conquest of Wales, and of Scotland, however, were, in the eyes of Edward, a more important concern; and little alteration is to be found in those melancholy scenes which we are about to record, during the reign of one of the wisest and most powerful monarchs that ever ascended the English throne. The same miseries, and the same petty warfare; the same recital of usurpations, on the one hand, and resistance on the other; the

same partial and puny effort to preserve the interests of the colony ; the same narrow and contracted policy, which was satisfied with the temporary suppression of an insurrection, and the ephemeral triumph of a particular family.—All this wearying round of miserable civil war is again to be witnessed during the reign of a prince, by whom Ireland could have been made the most productive, as she was the most beautiful portion of the British empire. On the accession of Edward to the English throne, Maurice Fitzmaurice was appointed his representative in Ireland.

The royal letter was received by the viceroy, promising protection to his Irish subjects ; and the nobility, knights, and free tenants, were called on to take the oaths of allegiance to Edward.

Maurice Fitzmaurice was not long in the seat of government, when a formidable insurrection broke out in the most flourishing parts of Leinster, and after a feeble struggle with the Irish, he was taken prisoner in Ophaly, (King's county) and committed to prison. The conquerors retaliated on the colonists, the depredations committed on their own territories ; and Glenville, the successor of Fitzmaurice, also experienced a singular defeat. In the mean time, the north of Ireland, supported by the marauders from the Scottish isles, was involved in the most afflicting dissensions, and Maurice Fitzmaurice, when released from prison, united with the lord Theobald Butler, and invaded the territories of the O'Briens. The family of Fitzmaurice had gained a great accession of force, by their con-

nection with Thomas de Clare, to whom Edward made extensive grants in the country of Thomond. This young nobleman was followed by a powerful train of attendants. The O'Briens expostulated, and the contest was at length to be terminated by the sword. Thus the perpetual encroachments of some English adventurer was wasting and usurping the property of the natives.

O'Brien fell a victim to treachery; but his sons, who succeeded, took most ample vengeance, and this furious war ended in the total overthrow of the family of the Geraldines; the O'Briens were declared sovereigns of Thomond, and the castles and forts surrendered to their generals.

De Clare appealed to Edward for protection; but new distractions and commotions in the west of Ireland, seemed to obliterate the remembrance of De Lacy's misfortunes from the royal bosom. Edward issued his royal mandate to the prelates of the pale, to interpose their spiritual authority, and to endeavour to compose the public disorders; but the impotence of such mandates can well be conceived, when thrown into the scale against the insatiable ambition and avarice, which perpetually stimulated the plunderers of the Irish.

The miseries experienced by that people, the uninterrupted persecutions with which their families and properties were desolated, the unsuccessful efforts which they made to expel the invaders of their country, broke down their spirits, and reconciled them to the alternative of peace, though on the condition of surrendering the ancient laws and cus-

toms of their country. The historians of the English write, that the Irish embraced the laws, from the conviction that only under such laws, and such an administration, could the peace and tranquillity of their country be restored, the blessings of freedom communicated, and the rights and privileges of man asserted. The fact is not so; and if this calumny on the Irish nation were not refuted by the most respected authorities, it would be contradicted by the observation of every man who attends to the working of the human heart. As well may it be said that the Irish petitioned for the desolation of their properties, as the overthrow of their laws and constitution. "They petitioned, it is true, under the torture of the lash, but this," says Mr Taaffe, "only proves their deplorable situation, and not a preference of English law to the old established and cherished laws of the country, under which their monarchy so long and so illustriously flourished." Mr Leland, after endeavouring to convince his readers that the Irish solicited the protection of English law, is obliged to admit the general sentiment of opposition, which animated that people against any innovation whatever: "Nor did those of the Irish who lived most detached from the English, perceive any advantage in exchanging their old institutions for another system. On the contrary, it was with the utmost labour and difficulty, and the most obstinate reluctance on their part, that the English law could be obtruded on them, even some centuries after the present period."

The answer of Edward to the petition of the per-

secuted people of Ireland, is so very remarkable for the hard and rigid terms on which he concedes to their wishes, that if we had no other reason to conclude against the degrading charge brought against them, that they volunteered in surrendering the laws and customs of their country, this instrument alone would prove that the king of England was determined to make his Irish subjects pay very dear indeed for what he and his generals called the blessings of the English constitution. Perhaps human pride can sustain no greater insult, nor the human heart be more bitterly afflicted, than by the promise of protection from that power, who, at the moment he is making professions of kindness and affection, is plundering our property, degrading our country, and trampling on the most honourable feelings of our nature. With the sword in one hand, and his free constitution in the other, it would be perhaps more than can be expected from the firmness of human nature to resist the kind and protecting offer. With the Irish, at this period, it would have been folly ; because it was a choice of evils on which the mind could not balance for a moment, distracted and divided as they were by foreign tyranny, and domestic treachery. The answer of Edward is too remarkable in its policy and its language, to omit it even in this compendium of Irish history.* It seems to be the

* Have we not seen a similar reply to the petition of those infamous and prostituted characters, who agreed to that humbling and degrading measure, called " an union between England and Ireland"—have we not had great and flattering promises of a more

artful model of subsequent concessions to Ireland ; which are, in substance, “ give me your liberties—give me your properties at my disposal—give up your country, and I will give to you in return the blessings of the English constitution.”

It thus proceeds :

“ Edward, by the grace of God, king of England, lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine, to our trusty and well-beloved Robert de Clifford, justiciary of Ireland, greeting :

“ The improvement of the state and peace of our land of Ireland, signified to us by your letter, gives us exceeding joy and pleasure. We entirely commend your diligence in this matter, hoping, by the divine assistance, that the things there begun so happily by you, shall, as far as in you lieth, be still further prosecuted with the greater vigour and success.

“ And whereas the community of Ireland hath made a tender to us of eight thousand merks, on condition that we grant to them the laws of England, to be used in the aforesaid land, we will give you to know, that in as much as the laws used by the Irish are hateful to God, and having held diligent conference and full deliberation with our council in this matter, it seems sufficiently expe-

substantial communication of English privileges, English capital, English manners, English improvements in arts and industry ; and for these specious and intoxicating blessings, we should stipulate to surrender that liberty which raised our country from beggary to independence, and should again agree to rely on the parental protection of that power, which chained down the rich and prolific energies of our country for 600 years.

dient to us and to our council, to grant to them the English laws ; provided always that the general consent of our people, or at least of the prelates and nobles of that land, well affected to us, shall uniformly concur on that behalf. We therefore command you, that, having entered into treaty with those Irish people, and examined diligently into the wills of our commons, prelates, and nobles, well affected to us, in this behalf, and having agreed between you and them on the highest fine of money that you can obtain, to be paid to us on this account—you do, with the consent of all, at least of the greater and sounder part aforesaid, make such a composition with the said people, on the premises, as you shall judge, in your diligence, to be most expedient for our honour and interest ; provided, however, that these people should hold in readiness a body of good and stout footmen, amounting to such a number as you shall agree upon with them, for one turn only, to repair to us when we shall think fit to demand them.” Such is the language of a king, communicating what he terms the blessings of English law ; and such are the conditions on which the tortured Irish inhabitants of the pale were to obtain the protection of his majesty Edward the first. But such is the language of tyranny over every conquered people ; the bayonet and the sword are the forerunners of the blessings which despotism dispenses ; and the sighs of a persecuted nation are generally answered by hypocritical professions of kindness from the hand which caused them.

Such was the influence of the petty tyrants of the Irish, that they were able to intercept the rays of royal mercy, however feeble in their heat; and the English ascendancy of the pale struggled with their sovereign, for the perpetuity of that monopoly of despotism, from which the native Irish petitioned to be relieved. It should be here observed, that the men who opposed the communication of English laws to the native Irish, professed the same religion and the same faith, as the unfortunate people over whom they ruled; that the ascendancy here complained of was an English ascendancy, and that the same opportunities, enjoyed by Catholic, as well as Protestant, would be equally abused, and the same tyranny equally exercised. No Irish Protestant has oppressed his countryman, because he is a Catholic—no—he has oppressed him because it was the policy of England to encourage and support a monopoly of power in the hands of a few, and when England became Protestant, her Irish tyrants were Protestants, as her Irish tyrants were Catholics in the time of Edward, because England was Catholic.

The commons, the prelates and nobles, who threw themselves between Edward and his subjects, and who endeavoured to preserve the little petty tyranny of monopoly, were catholics: but such is the nature of man under such circumstances; the temptation is too seducing, and the motive too strong to be weighed against the remote, though certain rewards of integrity and public virtue. Two years elapsed, and a second petition was presented by the

native Irish, and a second time resisted by the catholic barons, clergy and commons. The consequence of this tantalizing policy, was the universal distraction of the country, the renewal of the most implacable hostilities, and a wild, barbarous, and destructive civil war.

The English adventurers, the Fitzgeralds, the Burkes, the Butlers, Eustaces, and Lacys, rose on the ruins which spread around them, and notwithstanding the wise and benevolent remonstrances of MacCarty, the deluded natives seemed to vie with each other in promoting the schemes and confederacies of their common enemy. The great and important undertakings, in which the arms of Edward were now engaged, (1286), involved his government in embarrassments, and the sufferings of Ireland were no reason why an experiment to raise new resources, should not there be tried: he therefore demanded of the clergy, or rather of all the spiritualities within the pale, an additional fifteenth. After some altercation and delay, this demand of Edward was acceded to.

The distractions of Ireland were so great at this period, that Edward determined to make some effort to prevent their recurrence. For this purpose he deputed Sir John Wogan, in 1295, to administer the affairs of Ireland, or rather of that part of Ireland in possession of England. No viceroy as yet appeared better qualified, from the mildness of his temper, his excellent understanding, and sound discretion, to heal the bleeding wounds of Ireland. With firmness to put into execution, the well di-

gested resolutions of parliament, he suppressed those whom he could not sooth ; and we therefore see much done by this nobleman to compose the exhausting dissensions of the English barons with each other, and of the native Irish with both. He summoned parliament more frequently than usual, and we find the acts of this assembly at this period, more deserving of notice than those which have preceded them. Various regulations were made to restrain the insolence and tyranny of the barons, to put a stop to their perpetual encroachments on the territories of each other, and to prevent the recurrence of those exasperating practices which so frequently drove the native Irish to rebellion.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

EDWARD II.

A. D. THE important events of this reign should 1308. have been to England a source of useful instruction on the inevitable evils flowing from that narrow and confined policy, which estimated its security by the distracting divisions of Irishmen, by its success in running county against county, the Irish within the pale against their native countrymen, and erecting on the ruins and weakness of both parties, a disgusting and torturing English ascendancy.

The successful invasion of Edward Bruce, brother of the celebrated Scottish monarch, the devastation committed by his arms, and the universal shock then given to the English interests in Ireland, should have taught the sister country, the necessity of no longer relying on the power of a faction to keep down the resentment of an injured and insulted people. From this example, succeeding

rulers might have learned the wisdom of mild and parental government. They might have seen that the avarice of English speculators on the misfortunes of the people was the cause of general dissatisfaction, and that the first opportunity which may offer to a nation to release itself from the persecution of its enemies, will be embraced with equal ardour, as the Irish received the Scottish alliance of Edward Bruce.

Mr Hume, who does not often sympathise with the sufferings of this country, whose sensibility would be more affected by the misfortunes of a royal individual, than the miserable scene of distress which covered the whole people of Ireland for centuries, breaks out into the following indignant observation on the oppression practised by his countrymen on its devoted inhabitants: "The horrible and absurd oppressions which the Irish suffered under the English government, made them at first fly to the standard of the Scots, whom they regarded as their deliverers." Should not such an example have operated as a source of instruction to succeeding governments, not to be making so important a member of the British empire as Ireland, the common subject on which every experiment; suggested by tyranny or by ambition, was hereafter to be tried; the retreat of an odious favourite, or a bankrupt lord; the resting-place of every political adventurer who would submit to be the instrument of the sovereign, administering to his views of folly, passion, or tyranny. In the time of Edward II, we see the royal favourite, Pierce

Gaveston, odious to Englishmen, appointed the representative of majesty in Ireland. In succeeding times we shall find Ireland the grand *refugium peccatorum* of Englishmen ; the place of refuge for every bad or vicious passion, and the great scene of remuneration for every public delinquent, who has incurred the resentment, or merited the displeasure of the English nation. The vicegerent of Edward II., Pierce Gaveston, had so much offended the pride and independent spirit of the English barons, by the insolence of his demeanour, and the abuse of his royal master's partiality, that Edward was obliged to yield to the general sentiment against his favourite ; and, to blunt the edge of public vengeance, sent him to Ireland, where the services of Gaveston might, in some degree, obliterate the remembrance of those injuries of which the barons of England so loudly complained. The personal qualities of Gaveston were highly calculated to raise great public expectations of the effects of his administration ; and in this hope the English colonists were not disappointed. He displayed great vigour and ability as viceroy ; he extinguished rebellion the moment it raised its head, and established peace and tranquillity throughout his government, as much by the independent firmness of his administration, as by the promptitude and triumph of his arms. The splendour of the governor threw the English barons into the shade. Accustomed to dictate to the viceroy, those petty lords could not brook the high and supercilious demeanour of Gaveston ; and a rivalry of parade and ostentation between those

lords and the viceroy, had frequently the effect of protecting the people against the insolence and torture of petty tyranny.

Those symptoms of discontent had just appeared, when the favourite Gaveston was recalled; and the government was again entrusted, but with limited powers, to Sir John Wogan, who was compelled to consume his time, and that of parliament, with an idle contest for precedence between the prelates of Armagh and Dublin.

New wars were carried on between the lords of the pale, and the native Irish; and the Earl of Ulster, whose ambition had no bounds, wantonly invaded the territories of Thomond, where he suffered a signal defeat from the Geraldines. The result of those sanguinary contests was the union of the two families of the Geraldines and the family of the Earl of Ulster, an union which promised an interval of repose to the people of Ireland. A new scene now opened, which brought back all the miseries and distress from which Ireland flattered herself in some degree released. The triumph of liberty in Scotland roused the patriotic ardour of the native Irish, and the degrading contrast which their own situation exhibited, when compared with the glorious independence enjoyed by the Scottish nation, prompted the bold and intrepid spirits of Ireland, to emulate the conduct of the illustrious Bruce, who successfully asserted the freedom of his countrymen. They entered into correspondence with the monarch of Scotland; they solicited his protection in strong and pathetic language, and pro-

mised the universal co-operation of Ireland with his invading arms. The preparations making throughout Ireland for the reception of the Scottish invader, alarmed the government of the pale so much, that a deputation, composed of the Lords of Ulster, Edmond Butler, and Theobald de Verdun, was sent forward to consult with the king, his prelates, and nobles, on the critical and alarming situation of the English interests. We find these commissioners, who had communicated with the British monarch and his parliament, sent back to Ireland, to lay a statement of the royal determination in favour of the Irish, before the principal chieftains of the latter; promising redress of grievances, cessation of persecution, and stooping to the humility and meanness of soliciting the alliance of those people, whom the violence of English persecution had driven into the arms of rebellion.

Among other measures, offensive and defensive, adopted on this occasion by the Irish people, and the English monarch, we find an appeal to the pope, the grand arbiter of Europe, the thunder of whose bulls were heard with veneration in the remotest corners of the civilized world:

The pathetic and able remonstrance presented by the Irish people, on this occasion, to the most holy father, is the best picture which can be presented to posterity of the sufferings which Ireland experienced from the invasion of England. It is a compendium of human sorrow, and of goading exasperation, which no future pen could more strongly delineate; which brings tears into the

eyes of the Irish reader, and justifies, in a loud and emphatic tone, the efforts of our ancestors, who struggled for their deliverance.

The Irish chieftains, being only catholics, and not having the claims on papal partiality which the English monarch had, relied on the justice of their cause; and, fearless of contradiction, related the story of their sufferings in such strong and glowing terms, as called for the sympathy of the royal father, and moved him to interpose between the persecuted people of Ireland and the British monarch. Even in this abridgment of Irish history, we cannot refrain from giving, at length, and without curtailment, this interesting document of Irish grievances. To the English reader, it should be a fertile source of instruction; and to the rulers of Ireland it should be strong and satisfactory evidence of the necessity of securing the allegiance of Irishmen by services, rather than weakly endeavouring to humble and reduce their spirit by persecution. This Irish remonstrance is an able recapitulation of English administration, from the invasion of Henry II.; and is a triumphant vindication of their present resistance to England.

“ To the most holy father in Christ, lord John, by the grace of God; his devoted children, Donald O’Neil, king of Ulster, and by hereditary right true heir of Ireland, as also the chieftains, and nobles, and the people of Ireland, recommend themselves most humbly, &c. &c.

“ It is extremely painful to us, that the vicious detractions of slanderous Englishmen, and their in-

iquitous suggestions against the defenders of our rights, should exasperate your holiness against the Irish nation ; but alas ! you know us only by the misrepresentation of our enemies ; and you are exposed to the danger of adopting the infamous falsehoods which they propagate, without hearing any thing of the detestable cruelties they have committed against our ancestors, and continue to commit even to this day against ourselves.

“ Heaven forbid that your holiness should be thus misguided ; and it is to protect our unfortunate people from such a calamity, that we have resolved here to give you a faithful account of the present state of a kingdom we can call the melancholy remains of a nation that so long groans under the tyranny of the kings of England, and of the barons : some of whom, though born among us, continue to practise the same rapine and cruelties against us, which their ancestors did against ours heretofore. We shall speak nothing but the truth, and we hope that your holiness will not delay to inflict condign punishment on the authors and abettors of such inhuman calamities.

“ Know, then, that our forefathers came from Spain ; and our chief apostle, St Patrick, sent by your predecessor pope Celestine, in the year 435, did, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, most effectually teach us the truth of the holy Roman catholic faith, and that *ever since that period*, our kings, well instructed in the faith that was preached to them, have, in number sixty-one, without mixture of foreign blood, reigned in Ireland, to

the year 1170; and those kings were not Englishmen, nor of any other nation but our own; who with pious liberality bestowed ample endowments in lands, and many immunities on the Irish church; though in modern times our churches were most barbarously plundered by the English, by whom they are almost despoiled; and though those our kings so long and so strenuously defended against the tyrants and kings of different regions, the inheritance given them by God, preserving their innate liberty at all times inviolate, yet Adrian IV. your predecessor, an Englishman more even by affection and prejudice than by birth, blinded by that affection, and the false suggestions of Henry II. king of England, under whom, and perhaps by whom, St Thomas of Canterbury was murdered, gave the dominions of this our kingdom, by a certain form of words, to that same Henry II. whom he ought rather to have stripped of his own, on account of the above crime—thus omitting all legal and judicial order: and also, his national prejudices and predilections, blindfolding the discernment of the pontiff, without our being guilty of any crime, without any rational cause whatever, he gave us up to be mangled to pieces by the teeth of the most cruel and voracious of all monsters; and if, sometimes nearly flayed alive, we escape from the deadly bite of those treacherous and greedy wolves, it is but to descend into the miserable abysses of slavery, to drag on the doleful remains of a life more terrible than death itself, ever since those English appeared first upon our coasts, in virtue of the above

surreptitious donation. They entered our territories under a certain specious pretext of piety and external hypocritical show of religion; endeavouring in the mean time, by every artifice malice could suggest, to extirpate us root and branch, and without any other right than that of strength, they have so far succeeded by base and fraudulent cunning, that they have forced us to quit our fair and ample habitations, and paternal inheritances, and to take refuge, like wild beasts, in the mountains, woods, and morasses of the country; nor can even the caverns and dens protect us against their insatiable avarice. They pursue us even into those frightful abodes, endeavouring to dispossess us of the wild uncultivated rocks, and arrogating to themselves the property of every place on which we can stamp the figure of our feet; and through the excess of the most profound ignorance, impudence, arrogance, or blind insanity, scarcely conceivable, they dare to assert that not a single part of Ireland is ours, but by right entirely their own!

“ Hence the implacable animosities and exterminating carnage which are perpetually carried on between us; hence our continual hostilities, our bloody reprisals, our numberless massacres, in which, since their invasion to this day, more than 50,000 men have perished on both sides; not to speak of those who died by famine, despair, the rigours of captivity, and a thousand other disorders, which it is impossible to remedy, on account of the anarchy in which we live—an anarchy which, alas! is tremendous, not only to the state but also to the church

of Ireland ; the ministers of which are daily exposed, not only to the loss of the frail and transitory things of this world, but also to the loss of those solid and substantial blessings which are eternal and immortal.

“ Let those few particulars concerning our origin, and the deplorable state to which we have been reduced by the above donation of Adrian IV. suffice for the present.

“ We have now to inform your holiness, that Henry, king of England, and the four kings his successors, have violated the conditions of the pontifical bull, by which they were empowered to invade this kingdom ; for the said Henry promised, as appears by the said bull, to extend the patrimony of the church, and to pay to the apostolical see, annually, one penny for each house. Now this promise, both he and his successors above mentioned, and their iniquitous ministers, observed not at all with regard to Ireland ; on the contrary, they have entirely and intentionally eluded them, and endeavoured to force the reverse.

“ As to the church lands, so far from extending them, they have confined and retrenched and invaded them on all sides ; insomuch, that some cathedral churches have been, by open force, notoriously plundered of half their possessions : nor have the persons of our clergy been more respected ; for, in every part of the country, we find bishops and prelates cited, arrested, and imprisoned, without distinction ; and they are oppressed with such servile fear, by these frequent and unparalleled injuries,

that they have not the courage to represent to your holiness, the sufferings they are so wantonly condemned to undergo.

“ The English promised also to introduce a better code of laws, and to enforce better morals among the Irish people ; but, instead of this, they have so corrupted our morals, that the holy and dove-like simplicity of our nation is, on account of the flagitious example of those reprobates, changed into the malicious cunning of the serpent.

“ We had a written code of laws, according to which our nation was governed hitherto : they have deprived us of those laws, and of every law, except one, which it is impossible to wrest from us ; and, for the purpose of exterminating our people, they have established other iniquitous laws, by which injustice and inhumanity are combined for our destruction,—some of which we here insert for your inspection, as being so many fundamental rules of English jurisprudence, established in this kingdom.”

(The statement of the Irish then sets forth the laws, by which the lives, and properties, and feelings of their country, were sacrificed to the rapacious and cruel ascendancy of England. It then goes on in the following strong and emphatic language :—)

“ All hope of peace between us is therefore completely destroyed ; for such is their pride, such their excessive lust of dominion, such our ardent ambition to shake off this insupportable yoke, and recover the inheritance which they have so unjustly usurped, that as there never was, so there never

will be, any sincere coalition between them and us; nor is it possible there should, in this life; for we entertain a certain natural enmity against each other, flowing from mutual malignity, descending by inheritance from father to son, and spreading from generation to generation. Let no person wonder, then, if we endeavour to preserve our lives and defend our liberties as well as we can, against those cruel tyrants. So far from thinking it unlawful, we hold it to be a meritorious act; nor can we be accused of perjury or rebellion, since neither our fathers nor we did, at any time, bind ourselves by an oath of allegiance, to their fathers or to them; and therefore, without the least remorse of conscience, while breath remains, we will attack them in defence of our just rights; and never lay down our arms until we force them to desist. Besides, we are fully satisfied to prove, in a judicial manner, before twelve or more bishops, the facts which we have stated, and the grievances which we have complained of; not like these English, who, in time of prosperity, discontinue all legal ordinances, and, if they enjoyed prosperity at present, would not recur to Rome, as they do now; but would crush, with their overbearing and tyrannical haughtiness, all the surrounding nations, despising every law, human and divine.

“ Thereupon, on account of all those injuries, and a thousand others which human wit cannot easily comprehend; and on account of the kings of England, and their wicked ministers, who, instead of governing us, as they are bound to do, with just-

tice and moderation, have wickedly endeavoured to exterminate us off the face of the earth; and to shake off their detestable yoke, and recover our native liberties, which we lost by their means, we are forced to carry on an exterminating war, choosing, in defence of our liberties and lives, rather to rise like men, and expose our persons bravely to all the dangers of war, than any longer to bear like women those atrocious and detestable injuries; and, in order to obtain our interest the more speedily and consistently, we invite the gallant Edward Bruce; to whom, being descended from our most noble ancestors, we transfer, as we justly may, our right of royal dominion, unanimously declaring him our king, by common consent, who, in our opinion, and the opinion of most men, is as just, prudent, and pious, as he is powerful and courageous; who will do justice to all classes of people."

The pope had strong and influential reasons for his partiality to England, which did not exist in favour of Ireland. The English allowed his holiness both temporal and spiritual power—the Irish confined him to spiritual power. This accounts, in no small degree, for the papal partiality in favour of the former. A bull of excommunication was published some time afterwards, in which Robert and Edward Bruce are mentioned by name.

The thunders of the Vatican, however, were but a small impediment to the Scottish chief. Lord Edward Bruce appeared on the north-eastern coast of Ireland, on the 25th of May, 1315, with a fleet of 300 sail, carrying 6000 men; with this force

he laid waste the English settlements in the north of Ireland. Dundalk and Atherdee opened their gates.

The west and south hailed their deliverer with enthusiasm, and flocked to his standard, animated with the hope that the hour had arrived when the wrongs of their country would be redressed. The disunion of the English lords facilitated the progress of the enemy; and the artifices of Bruce, practised with success on the ambition of Fedlim O'Connor, the king of Connaught, detached a large and powerful force from the ranks of his enemies.

Fedlim O'Connor is deposed by his brother Roderic; and the former, aided by English auxiliaries, recovers his throne, and, contrary to his solemn engagements, joins the forces of the Scotch invader, Edward Bruce. O'Brien of Thomond, the chieftains of Munster and Meath, declare for Bruce; the clergy proclaim him as the deliverer of Ireland from the tyranny of England; and the coronation of Edward Bruce at Dundalk, gave confidence to the timid, and increased boldness to the friends of Irish freedom. The illustrious Robert Bruce came over to Ireland with a large force, to confirm the pretensions of his brother to its sovereignty; and though opposed by the most unprecedented dearth of provisions, took many of the strongest places in Ulster, and laid waste the country through which he passed.

The fears of the colony at length began to rouse them from their lethargy; and the danger of being

expelled by the Scotch invaders from those great and princely estates which they had purchased with their blood, united the English lords in one common sentiment, and determined them to make one general effort against this formidable enemy. On this occasion the most distinguished English barons received new titles and new honours from the hands of the British monarch. John Fitzthomas, baron of Ophaly, was created Earl of Kildare; Lord Edmund Butler received the title of Earl of Carrick. An army was sent by the colony into Connaught, against Fedlim O'Connor, who laid waste the territories of a number of English barons surrounding his kingdom, and threatened an universal annihilation of the English name, had it not been for the battle of Athunree, in which the English put forth all their strength, and gained a most decisive victory. Fedlim O'Connor fell on the field of battle, with eight thousand of his troops. In the mean time, Bruce proceeded in his destructive progress through the north, and met with no obstacle to his ambition, until he arrived at the walls of the metropolis. Here the Scottish chief met with a resistance that compelled him to march into Kildare, which he desolated with all the cruelty of a disappointed and baffled general. The fury of Bruce, and the havoc committed by his army on the property of the English colony, united those barons whom a more artful policy might have divided, and rendered tributary to his purposes. The miserably impoverished state of the country at this period, proved more formidable to Bruce than the sword of his

enemies. It is related, that the famine was so dreadful, that the carcasses of the dead soldiers were the only sustenance of the living. Bruce, however, after all his losses from the visitation of Providence, made a desperate effort to maintain his conquest. He met the English near Dundalk; the conflict was violent, and sustained on each side with equal bravery; but at length victory declared for the English general.—Edward was slain in this desperate engagement; and thus terminated an expedition, which promised in its commencement a speedy deliverance from the English power, and which, at the end of three years, left her an object of pity and wretchedness to surrounding nations.

The miseries of the people were greatly aggravated at this period, (1318,) by the different modes of jurisdiction that governed the native and the colonist. The calamitous effects which flowed to the governors as well as the governed, demonstrated the fatuity of such a policy. To murder an Irishman was punishable only by fine; the murder of an Englishman was a capital offence. The Englishman who plundered his neighbour was condemned to death; the Irishman who committed the same crime was often handed over to his Brehon, or Irish judge, who had it in his power to compound with the offender; an indulgence which, it is related, seduced numbers of disorderly Englishmen to renounce their name and nation. This wretched policy gave unlimited reins to the vengeance of an enemy, and exposed society to all the horrors of

civil war and anarchy. The worst passions found protection in the law, and the weak and innocent fell victims to the strong and the guilty. The partial administration of justice, the corruption of the judges, the depraved state of the public mind, were evils sufficiently great to impoverish the political body; but the absurd and cruel practice of quartering the soldiers on the miserable inhabitants, and exposing them to the insatiable exactions of an unbridled soldiery, filled up the cup of Irish suffering, and presented to the eye a universal scene of anarchy, rapine, and massacre. The consequence of this baneful practice was, that the English freeholders, rather than endure such perpetual torture, fled to the country of the native Irish, learned their language and their manners, and were undistinguished, in the course of time, from the native inhabitants. Among those of the English barons who imposed those arbitrary exactions on the unfortunate people, was Maurice Fitzthomas of Desmond; who, it is said, to preserve the power he had usurped, (having expelled all the English settlers from his immense estates, which were soon occupied by his Irish followers,) he became an Irish chieftain, and only acknowledged those laws which secured him undiminished or unlimited power over his tenantry. The English and Irish soon united into one mass, and became one people, united against English law, and English connection. Such was the scene which Ireland exhibited when Edward III. came to the English throne.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

EDWARD III.

A.D. 1327. **THE** miserable situation to which Ireland was reduced by the Scottish invasion, which let loose the violent and furious passions of a people unrestrained by law, and uncontrolled by a settled and impartial system of jurisprudence, would incline us to suppose that the barbarities and atrocities committed by the colonists on the natives, were rather the offspring of particular circumstances, and peculiar only to that country in which such circumstances existed, than a miniature of the universal anarchy which the British empire then exhibited.

Mr Hume, when describing the manners of the English people in the reign of Edward II. writes thus : “ The estate of an English baron was managed by his bailiffs, and cultivated by his villains. Its produce was consumed in rustic hospitality by the baron and his officers. A number of idle re-

tainers, ready for any mischief or disorder, were maintained by him ; all who lived upon his estate were absolutely at his disposal ; and instead of applying to courts of justice, he usually sought redress by open force and violence. The great nobility were a kind of independent potentates, who, if they submitted to any regulations at all, were less governed by the municipal law than by a rude species of the law of nations."

How the historian who, in the impartial spirit of history, gives such a description of the state of society among his own countrymen, in the reign of Edward II. can be seduced to designate the Irish as barbarians, whose manners and customs were exactly similar, can only be accounted for by that determined spirit of hostility which Mr Hume always manifests against the Irish nation. It is not surprising, that a nation like Ireland, which has been the common prey of foreign invasion, of the Danes, the English, and the Scotch, should contain within its bosom all the pernicious materials of intestine warfare and distraction—that an English party and a Scotch party should be found to fly to arms in the hour of invasion, and that a system of government which put the great mass of the people out of the protection of the law, should have generated all those miserable scenes which perpetually present themselves.

In England, we find from Mr Hume, that the strong arm of the sovereign could not restrain the barbarous tyranny of the English baron. How then could it be expected that the feeble orders of the

royal deputy should have silenced the clamours of faction, repressed the violence of the petty lord, or introduced a spirit of order or civilization into the great political body of the Irish people?

Amidst the distractions which disfigured the fair face of Ireland at this melancholy æra of her depression, we are relieved in some degree by the philanthropic efforts made by a few prelates to check the vices and disorders of the community. Two archbishops laboured to establish a university in Dublin, not only for the study of theology, but that of the civil and canon law, then a fashionable part of European literature. Archbishop Bricknor distinguished himself on this occasion by the liberality of his patronage, and Edward III. enlarged the original endowment, and granted his protection to the students of the new seminary, some years after its first establishment; but the dawn of public instruction was greatly clouded by the sad examples of fanaticism which some of the ecclesiastical colonists exhibited at this period. Charges of heresy were brought by private resentment and vengeance against the most distinguished families, and the punishment of the church made instrumental to the gratification of malice and ambition. Richard Ledred, bishop of Ossory, a man of violent and vindictive passions, encouraged the persecutions of the fanatic; and charges of heresy were brought against the magistrate as well as the peasant, who in many instances were destroyed by the faggot, or withered away in a prison. The bishop of Ossory himself became a victim in turn,

and was obliged to fly the country which he had visited with the fury of his superstition.

We do not find that the accession of Edward III. to the British throne, contributed in any degree to restrain the violence of faction, or to prevent each English baron from pursuing, as usual, his own personal schemes of ambition. He despised the authority of the deputy, and treated with equal contempt the royal mandate of Edward, who wrote letters to the principal barons, enjoining them, on their allegiance, to pay due obedience to the chief governor, Thomas Fitzjohn, Earl of Kildare.

Private wars continued to be waged as usual; and the calling a name, or offering a personal insult, involved the Irish chiefs, with their respective followers, in the most sanguinary contests. Hence the destructive battles of Maurice of Desmond with John de la Poer. The king commanded them to lay down their arms; and at length the apprehension that the native Irish would take advantage of their divisions, put an end to hostilities which desolated the English territories.

Another effort is now made by the native Irish to enjoy the shelter of British law, and no longer to be the victims of the ambition and avarice of the contending barons, who were perpetually oppressing the Irish, and goading them to insurrection, in order to plunder them of their properties. The Irish petition for the privileges of English subjects, and their petition is insolently rejected by an Anglo-Irish parliament, whose monopoly could only be preserved by the persecution of the people. The

consequence of such contumelious treatment was a most formidable insurrection of the Irish; and so formidable was this Irish insurrection, that the power which could not be conquered by the sword, they practised on by bribery. Maurice of Desmond was invited by the English to join their forces, and promises of the most alluring kind were held out to this Irish prince, if he deserted the ranks of his countrymen. They created him Earl of Desmond, and bestowed new territories on him.

The Irish, with the celebrated O'Brien at their head, continued to harass the English settlement, and almost threatened it with annihilation. Sir Anthony Lucy was appointed to the government of the colony. He determined, by a prosecution of the war, to reduce the Irish, as well as to disconcert that formidable confederacy formed by the English barons to circumscribe his power. He summoned a parliament to meet him at Dublin: his order was neglected;—he seized the Earl of Desmond, Mandeville, Walter de Burgo, William and Walter Birmingham.

It was about this period (1330), that Edward III. declared his intention of visiting Ireland. He issued some ordinances for the better regulation of the kingdom, and the more impartial administration of justice: he resumed all the Irish grants made during the reign of his mother, and her favourite, Mortimer.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of the preparations which Edward made for his visit to Ireland, it soon appeared that his real object was the

invasion of Scotland, and, imitating the example of his illustrious grandfather, to recover the dominion of that important kingdom. Ireland was thus left to be preyed upon by new competitors for her riches, and new adventurers for plunder. The denunciations of a rigorous government subsided into the timid concessions of a weak and impotent administration; and the assassination of the Earl of Ulster completed the despair of all those who trembled for the security of the English colonists. Many of the English barons declared for the Irish; and the governor had not only to contend with the common enemy, but with the treason of those chieftains on whose allegiance he thought he might reasonably rely. He seized two of the noble house of De la Poer; he confined Maurice Fitzmaurice of Kerry, and visited with severe punishment those who had disturbed the peace of Leinster.

Such a state of things as we have been describing, was ill calculated to enrich the treasury of the ambitious and martial Edward. His Irish resources were far below his expectations; and his disappointment at the alarming deficiency so extreme, that he withdrew all confidence from those of his Irish servants who had the administration of Irish affairs. He therefore resolved on the most violent and offensive measures; all the principal ministers and officers of government were discharged; the justices of the king's bench and common pleas. He issued the most rigid and severe ordinances for the future regulation of his possessions in Ireland; and by one very remarkable order, he withdrew his

confidence entirely from all those Englishmen who held any Irish properties, under the impression that they were interested in the distractions of that unhappy country, which gave them an opportunity of increasing the extent of their territories; and plundering the devoted natives. The spirit and purport of this order is so very singular, and so well describes the total sacrifice of the English interests by the colonists to their own aggrandizement; that we shall set it down here for the satisfaction of the reader:

“ The king to his trusty and beloved John D’Arcy, justiciary of Ireland, greeting :

“ Whereas it appeareth to us and to our council, for many reasons, that our service shall the better and more profitably be conducted in the said land; by English officers, having revenues and possessions in England, than by Irish or Englishmen married and estated in Ireland, and without any possessions in our realm of England; we enjoin you that you diligently inform yourself of all our officers, greater or lesser, within our land of Ireland aforesaid; and that all such officers beneficed, married and estated in the said land, and having nothing in England, be removed from their offices; that you place and substitute in their room other *fit Englishmen*, having lands, tenements, and benefices in England; and that you cause the said offices for the future to be executed by such Englishmen, and none other, any order of ours to you made in contrarywise notwithstanding.”

The effect of such an order was the immediate

disaffection of all the principal barons of the colony, whose pride was wounded, and whose past services were thus rewarded by the most wanton and contumelious insult. The chief governor, Sir John Morris, undistinguished by birth or by property, deemed it necessary to summon a parliament in Dublin on this critical occasion; but the lords whom he had to govern, were determined not to be insulted with impunity. They therefore embarrassed, by every possible expedient, the administration of the colony. Under the direction of Desmond, they convened a parliament at Kilkenny; they styled themselves the prelates, nobles, and commons of the land; and prepared a remonstrance to be transmitted to the British monarch. In this remonstrance the barons charged the viceroy with a base and unprincipled neglect of the king's interests; the desertion of his castles; the abandonment of his territories to the native Irish, which cost so much treasure and blood in the acquisition; the insolent exercise of authority over the nobles of the land; the plunder and the extortion of their properties, and an infamous monopoly of the wealth of the country. They complained that they had been misrepresented to the throne, by mean, ignorant, and avaricious adventurers from England;—that they had been ever faithful in their allegiance to his majesty;—that they had borne arms in his cause at their own expence;—and that, in return for such services, they had been plundered of their properties, and insulted in their feelings. To this remonstrance, Edward replied in a gracious.

and condescending tone;—he promised a milder administration, and a future correction of the evils complained of by his subjects.

The remonstrance, which we have just mentioned as being presented by the English lords of the colony, against the rapacity of the new adventurers, is a good picture of the oppression and sufferings of which the native Irish could have complained, and with the perpetration of which they might have justly charged those very lords, who were now swept away by the new tide of rapacity, which rushed in from the chief source of misfortune. It was a just retaliation for the barbarities inflicted on the ancient Irish, and the great retribution of Providence for the miseries which they had inflicted on an unoffending people:—"Whatever measure you measure unto others, the same measure shall be measured unto you."

In the course of this history, it will be found that one wave of English enterprise washed away the preceding; that every fresh swarm of English adventurers annihilated their predecessors, and gave them the exact measure which was given to the ancient inhabitants.

The dissensions and discontents were but little diminished by the royal promise to redress the grievances of the remonstrancers. The spirit of monopoly among the new rulers of the pale, counteracted the purpose and interests of the monarch; and the same jealousies between the old English settlers and the new English settlers continued with unabated rancour. The attention of Edward was

too much occupied with his grand and magnificent speculations of conquest and glory in France, to turn for a moment to a careful consideration of the best remedies for the disorders which convulsed his Irish dominions; but a chief governor happened to be appointed about this period (1345), who possessed those qualities of vigour and determination, which were well suited to curb and restrain the vindictive and violent passions of the people he was to govern.

Sir Ralph de Ufford was entrusted with the Irish administration. This firm and active deputy not only suppressed the common enemy, but he also reduced to obedience those English barons, of whom Desmond and Kildare were at the head. The sudden death of this efficient chief governor, replunged the colony into its old factions, and revived all its old animosities. Sir John Morris, possessing a mild and conciliating disposition, succeeded, and was unequal to the task of awing into obedience these turbulent lords whom Sir Ralph de Ufford had put down.

Edward had now (1346) completed his preparations for the invasion of France; and Desmond having appeared before this monarch to complain of the injuries he had received from the chief governor, was solicited by Edward to join his standard, and participate in the fame and laurels he was about to acquire against the common enemy of England. The complaints of Desmond and Kildare were attended to; their lands restored, and those noble and powerful barons, with their numer-

ous followers, contributed in an eminent degree to the fame of English arms, in the celebrated battle of Cressy. Edward witnessed with the enthusiasm of a hero, the agility and strength, and skill at arms, displayed by his Irish auxiliaries; and the Earl Kildare so greatly distinguished himself at the siege of Calais, that he received the honour of knighthood from the king's hand, and returned to Ireland, covered with military glory and royal honours.

The restoration of Desmond and Kildare to their extensive estates in Ireland, contributed in a great degree to tranquillize the colony; but the animosity of the old English against their newly arrived brethren, was too deeply rooted to suffer that complete harmony, which would have insured the stability of the English interests in this country. The old English formed alliances with the native Irish; their manners and customs and affections became Irish, and the union of the people was considered by the viceroy, as the certain forerunner of the destruction of the English power. It was therefore enjoined by royal mandate, that "No mere Irishmen should be admitted into any office or trust in any city, borough, or castle in the king's land; that no bishop or prior, under the king's dominion and allegiance, should admit any of this race to an ecclesiastical benefice, or into any religious house, on account of consanguinity or other pretence whatever;" thus breaking up all those social and endearing connections which time had formed, which good policy would have strengthened, and which

only excited the envy, the jealousy, and malignity of a short-sighted monopoly. Such is the epitome of Irish history, and in those few words might Ireland's story be told, for 600 years of English domination. Of those impolitic ordinances the native chiefs took advantage, and "*Bellum ad internecionem*" was the signal from one corner of the kingdom to the other: O'Neil from the north, O'Brien from the south, recruited their forces by the foolish denunciations of their inveterate enemies. They desolated the English territories, and threatened the English power in Ireland with complete annihilation. "A want of concert and union," writes Mr Leland, "among the Irish, prevented them from demolishing the whole fabric of English power, by one general and decisive assault."

Edward, habituated to victory, saw, with considerable agitation, the miserable disorders of his Irish dominions. He sent forward his second son, Lord Lionel, who was affianced, in his tender years, to the daughter of the Earl of Ulster, and by right of his wife, claimed immense property in Ireland. A royal proclamation was issued, that all Englishmen holding lands in Ireland, should join the prince's standard. Fifteen hundred men were thus collected; and, in 1361, Lord Lionel, accompanied by Ralph, Earl of Stafford, James, Earl of Ormond, Sir John Carew, Sir William Windsor, and other knights of distinction, landed in Ireland.

Lionel, diffident of the old settlers, trusted entirely to his new companions in arms, who were ignorant of the nature of the country, the habits and

manners of the Irish, and unequal to the struggle with their experienced leaders. Defeat and disaster were the consequences of such imprudent steps. This partial policy therefore was abandoned, and the old English settlers were invited to the prince. This new system in some degree checked the career of the Irish ; but Lionel having carefully observed the circumstances of the colony, did not place any great confidence in temporary expedients. He summoned a parliament at Kilkenny, which proved more respectable and more numerous than was ever before convened in Ireland.

The prelates of Dublin, Cashel, Tuam, Lismore, Waterford, Killaloe, Ossory, Leighlin, and Cloyne, obeyed the summons of the king's son. The temporal peers and commons cheerfully attended. It is to be observed, that both estates sat together ; and the result of their deliberations was that famous ordinance, the statute of Kilkenny. It is impossible to look back upon this statute, without deploring that barbarous selfishness and absurd antipathy, which such an instrument exhibits to posterity. That a people remarkable for their hospitality and kindness to strangers, as the Irish are acknowledged to be ; that the connections formed by the imperative ordinances of time, among a people distinguished by the strength of their social affections, the acute sensibility of their feelings, and the honour and candour of their hearts, should be thus driven out of the pale of civilization, and denied the common rights of mankind, is only to be accounted for by that infuriate and poisoned sentiment

which monopoly generates in the human breast ; which makes man a tyger among his species, swallowing up and devouring, with insatiable appetite, all those rights, privileges, and advantages, which it imagines would be lost by participation among his countrymen. The same blind and wretched sentiment characterised the Spartan, as well as the English settler ; and the miseries of the Helot, and the Irish native, were sweet sounds to the ears of the monopolist, whom it had pleased Providence to arm with ascendancy. “ This statute of Kilkenny,” says Mr Taaffe, with honourable feelings of indignation, “ empaled the pale from social life ; it formed an insulated Jewish cast, abhorring all, and abhorred by all ; the Jews were insulated from the neighbouring idolatrous nations, to guard them against idolatry.”

“ This English pale excluded the intercourse of a people better Christians than they, better men, more civilized. What crime,” says Mr Taaffe, “ could be in the melody of the Irish harps, chanting the sweet strains of Erin’s bards ? Why should Irish learning and piety be excluded from benefices founded by Irishmen, or from monasteries founded by them ?—The Norman conquerors passed no such statute in England, nor the heathen Danes in Ireland.” Yet, let it not be forgotten, that the parliament which enacted this statute was a popish one ; that its denunciations against Catholics are by Catholics, and that the same unwearied despotism, which, in succeeding times, poured new blood on the pages of our statute-book, caused the enact-

ment of this infamous statute of Kilkenny. To England alone should our eyes be perpetually turned, the prolific source of all our sorrows, and the indefatigable corrupter of our people. A Catholic or a Protestant Parliament, under its malignant influence, is equally blasting of the energies, and torturing to the feelings of our country. The Catholic is a blockhead who condemns the Protestant as the enemy of Irish freedom. The Catholic, under the burning heat of an English treasury, would be equally malleable to English purposes. We should therefore learn to look to the first cause of Ireland's treachery to herself.

The statute of Kilkenny enacted, that marriage, nurture of infants, and gossiped, with the Irish, should be considered and punished as high treason. It enacted, that if any man of English race shall use an Irish name, the Irish language, or the Irish apparel, or any mode or custom of the Irish, he shall forfeit lands and tenements, until he hath given security in the Court of Chancery, to conform in every particular to the English manners; or if he has no lands, that he shall be imprisoned until the like security be given. This kind and benevolent statute made it penal to the English to permit their Irish neighbours to graze their lands, to present to ecclesiastical benefices, or receive them into monasteries or religious houses. It also enacted, that the colonists should not entertain the Irish bards, who perverted their imaginations by romantic tales, or their news-tellers, who seduced them by false reports. Such are the provisions of an act for the better se-

curing the English interests in Ireland, and the more effectually extirpating the Irish name and nation. Such has ever been the impotent instrument, and the barren expedient of despotism, in all ages and countries, which has no security but in chains, reposes no confidence but in the sword, and looks at every object around it with eyes of jealousy and suspicion. The reflection of Mr Leland on this celebrated statute, is very unworthy the kind and benignant feelings which should distinguish the Irish historian: "Such," he writes, "were the institutions of an assembly quoted in Ireland with reverence, confirmed and renewed in after times as of most salutary influence." What Irishman, with the feelings of an honest man, can quote with reverence the provisions of such an act as the statute of Kilkenny, unless proscription, barbarity, selfishness, and a complete abandonment of principle, be such qualities as human nature will praise and admire. The effect of this cruel statute, was the suppression of those factions, in some degree, which distracted the pale; but it had also the effect of making the hostility of the Irish take a deeper root; and we soon find that O'Brien and O'Connor visit the colonists with implacable vengeance. So miserable was the state of Ireland, so barbarised were the natives by the *enlightened* legislation of English adventurers, that we have to record the refusal of Sir Richard Pembridge to administer the affairs of Ireland, or to fill the hazardous and dangerous station of viceroy of Ireland. It was therefore assigned to Sir

William Windsor. He obtained from the king an annual appointment of eleven thousand pounds, to defray the charges of his government; and we are informed by Sir John Davis, that the whole revenue of the pale, certain and casual, did not amount to ten thousand pounds annually.

The barren and unproductive effects of that system which Edward acted upon in Ireland, are well illustrated by a remarkable occurrence which now (1376) took place. It should teach government how unprofitable are the eviscerations of tyranny, and the extortions of avarice. The distractions and poverty of Ireland were now so great, that Edward sent forward an agent, Nicholas Dagworth, to ascertain the real cause of deficiency of revenue experienced in his Irish dominions. Edward summoned the parliament of the pale to Westminster. The Irish representatives sat at Westminster; and what success Edward had from this interview with his Irish parliament, is not on record; but the impotency of the statute of Kilkenny is acknowledged by the rapid declension of the English interest, the multiplication of English and Irish connections, and the necessary relaxation of the severe and cruel provisions that statute contained. The reign of one of the most renowned of the English monarchs closed, without imparting a single benefit to this ill-fated country. Too much occupied with the brilliant and unproductive glories of foreign conquest, he consigned his kingdom of Ireland to the passions and follies, and experiments of deputies,

who had neither the talents nor the power to promote any lasting scheme of sound or profound policy. Mr Leland truly observes, "It was the perverse fate of Ireland to suffer more from the most renowned, than the weakest of the English monarchs."

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

RICHARD II.

A. D.
1377.

THE events of this reign are well calculated to exhibit the follies of the last ; and the devastation which the colony suffered from the vengeance of the Irish, is no bad commentary on the wretched effects of that policy which seeks its safety rather in the strength of the chain, than the affections of the heart. The English were either driven from their lands, or those who were suffered to preserve them were obliged to pay tribute to the native Irish chieftains.

The parliament of England murmured at the constant waste of blood and treasure incurred by the maintenance of the Irish dominions. The national treasury, exhausted by the foreign wars in which England was so long involved by the ambition of Edward, had recourse to every expedient which ingenuity or wisdom could suggest. Absentees were heavily taxed. The Irish were permitted

to work their mines, on condition of paying a ninth of the produce: they were allowed to coin money, and to hold a free trade with Portugal; thus granting to Ireland, from necessity, what should have been long before suggested by sound national policy. The foreign enemies of England took advantage of the unfortunate counsels of the colony, and the Scotch and French invaded the Irish shores. Those strong illustrations of the folly of governing Ireland by harsh and violent measures, were not sufficient to open the eyes of England. Richard, always the victim of his passions and partialities, intrusted the Irish government to Philip de Courtney, a man of the most violent and oppressive disposition. So excessive were the extortions of this baron, that even Richard was obliged to surrender him to the vengeance of his accusers.

A new scene now opens, in which the weakness, the vanity, and the tyranny of Richard, eminently contribute to increase the calamities of Ireland. To a monarch, possessed of a good understanding, and armed with the power which Richard was able to command, the opportunity enjoyed by the latter to put an end to the distractions of Ireland, might have been the beginning of a new and prosperous era, and the establishment of such a system as would give permanent tranquillity to the empire; but the most unmeaning partialities for the most worthless of his subjects, and a complete abandonment of the solid and substantial interests of his empire to the gratification of his favourites, kept Ireland exposed to a perpetuity of that bad government which

generated so much calamity to the colony, as well as the native Irish.

Richard, in obedience to his ruling passion, invested the corrupt and profligate Earl of Oxford with the marquissate of Dublin. He also grafted to him the entire dominion of Ireland, and empowered this young and giddy lord to appoint all officers of state and justice. The latter was bound in return to pay into the English exchequer five thousand marks annually. The inordinate partiality of the king would not suffer his favourite to leave the royal presence; but he continued to heap new honours on his head, and sent forward deputies to perform the duties of the Earl of Oxford as duke of Ireland.

The indignation of the English barons at the impudent arrogance of Oxford, who trampled on their dignity and their feelings, broke out in every corner of England, and Richard and his favourite were obliged to yield to the storm of public vengeance. The Earl of Oxford was stripped of all his honours, and the Irish administration ceased to be carried on in the name or under the seal of the deposed earl.

We find nothing very novel in the transactions of the colony until the determination of Richard to visit his Irish dominions. This monarch landed at Waterford in the year 1394, with a royal army, consisting of 4000 cavalry, and 30,000 archers, attended by the duke of Gloucester, Earls of Nottingham and Rutland, Thomas, lord Percy, and other distinguished personages. The reflections of Mr Leland on this royal visit to Ireland, is both

just and philosophic.—“An army,” says he, “commanded by some of the prime nobility of England, with the monarch at their head; the presence of the king to inspect the conduct of his ministers, to hear and examine the complaints of his subjects, were circumstances of considerable moment, if duly improved; and, if united with a liberal and equitable spirit of policy, must have established the authority of the English government, and the general pacification and civility of the kingdom, on the firmest basis; but,” he continues, “the pride of the English forbade them to propose the generous scheme of receiving all the inhabitants into the body of English subjects, or of communicating the benefits of a free and equitable constitution to those whom they most absurdly called their inferiors. However lively their own regard to liberty, they accounted it a blessing too precious not to be confined to themselves; for,” says Mr Leland, “they had not acquired that extended and comprehensive benevolence which is the effect of refinement and deep moral reflection.” This is a great admission, from such an authority, of the folly of those counsels that would close the door of a free constitution against a people petitioning for its benefits. It well describes the selfish spirit of monopoly, and the events which follow in the reign of the unfortunate and foolish Richard, demonstrate, to the most superficial thinker, the weakness and distraction which must unavoidably flow from bigoted and contracted counsels.

Had that spirit of equitable policy, of which Mr

Leland speaks, influenced the English counsels of Ireland, we should have been long since united to the sister country by the ties of kindness and gratitude; their injuries and triumphs would be our's; we should have rejoiced as they rejoiced, and the defeat and depression of the English power would never have been proclaimed the elevation and victory of Ireland.

Richard, instead of making such arrangements as might give permanent security to the Irish dominions, employed himself and his followers in an idle display of his royal magnificence. He brought over his crown jewels, and seemed more anxious to dazzle the Irish chieftains by the splendour of his living and retinue,* than by the wisdom of his counsels, or intimidate them by the terror of his arms. He considered the voluntary surrender of the principal chieftains as equivalent to their com-

* "We have already," says Mr Taaffe, "observed the rudeness and ill-breeding of John's courtiers; but then—they were young! Well; let us see the behaviour of Richard's courtiers, the prime nobility of England. The four principal kings, O'Neil, O'Connor, O'Brien, M'Murchad, sat at King Richard's table, in their robes of state. Ormond, and Henry Castile, a gentleman of Richard's court, interpreted. The staring courtiers importuned them with such questions as argued the meanest conceptions of their manners and understanding, and were answered 'with indignation and affected dignity.' Why, Mr Leland, '*affected dignity*?' Dignity was a sentiment habitual to the mind of an Irish chieftain, needing no affectation. Froissard, an eyewitness, does not call that dignity affected. Rudeness may be a part of English politeness: I cannot otherwise account for the supercilious and unmannerly conduct of the English courtiers towards their master's guests, men every way their superiors."

plete reduction. Possessed with the importance of his achievements, he communicated them in form to the Duke of York, regent of England. He pointed out the three distinctions of inhabitants in Ireland—the Irish enemies, the rebels of both races, and the English subjects. The Irish, he said, had submitted, and become his vassals; the rebels, he conceived, had received but too just provocation, and was therefore disposed to grant them a general pardon. Thus, after a residence of nine months in Ireland, Richard embarked for England, without being able to boast of having added a single acre to the English pale, or having gained a single advantage, though the leader of the largest force ever brought into Ireland. The immediate effect of the departure of Richard was the renewal of hostilities, the infraction of treaties, by the avarice and ambition of both parties: the flame of war broke out with its old fury, and every part of the colony was again involved in confusion and anarchy.

Ormond marches against the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, and the sept of O'Toole annihilate a large body of the royal forces. Mortimer, the son of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, is slain in a battle with the O'Byrnes, and the death of this gallant baron again prompts the British monarch to revisit his kingdom of Ireland, and revenge the death of his favourite.

In the spring of the year 1399, his preparations were complete; the reports of secret conspiracies which reached the royal ear, did not slacken his de-

termination ; and, accompanied by the Duke of Exeter, the Earl of Salisbury, some prelates, and the young Lord Henry of Lancaster, he sailed for Ireland, to re-act the same scene of folly we have already witnessed.

The character of Richard was now tolerably well appreciated by the Irish chieftains ; and the celebrated Arthur MacMurchad O'Kavenagh, a youth of sixteen, determined that the English monarch should dearly purchase his conquests in Ireland. We find that this Irish hero, at the head of 3000 men only, was able, by the admirable skill and dexterity of his movements, to baffle the immense force which England brought into the field against him. His knowledge of the country,—the numberless resources it offered to an ingenious mind, full of resources, and prompt and vigorous to put them into effect,—the various artifices and traps which he laid to embarrass the progress of the enemy,—at length succeeded in compelling the boasting Richard to make him offers of castles, and forts, and territory, on condition of his sheathing his avenging and powerful sword. The Irish prince for some time hesitated ; but having at length agreed to enter into a negotiation, Richard appointed Gloucester to meet the Irish chieftain,

Froissard describes the Irish prince, tall in stature ; formed for agility and strength ; of aspect fierce and severe ; mounted on a swift and stately horse, without saddle, and darting rapidly from a mountain between two woods adjacent to the sea, attended by his train. At his command they halt-

ed at due distance, while their leader, casting his spear from him, which he grasped in his right hand, rushed forward to meet the English lord. The parley was continued for a considerable time ; the Irish prince was reminded of his late engagements, his grievous infractions, his attack on the king's vicegerent, and the slaughter both of him and his forces : The Irish chieftain proudly answered, and with dignity justified his conduct. He would be at peace with the English monarch, but would yield to no humiliating conditions to procure it.

Gloucester returned to the king ; and the result of the conference so severely wounded the feelings and pride of the English monarch, that he passionately vowed he would never depart from Ireland, until he had possessed himself of this rebel, dead or alive ;—a vain and empty threat. He retreated with his routed army to Dublin, where he remained six weeks, hurling impotent proclamations against the illustrious MacMurchad O'Kavenagh, till the rapid strides of his rebel subjects of England, roused him from his idle dreams of conquest in Ireland. He returned to England, where he fell a victim to an indignant and abused nation. The sufferings of this unfortunate monarch, inflicted on him in his last moments, incline the feeling heart to forget the errors of his government. The barbarity of his English enemies obliterates the remembrance of the oppression and folly which ended the reign of the weak and miserable Richard.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

HENRY IV.

A. D. THE accession of the house of Lancaster 1400. gave birth to a new epoch in Irish suffering, and threw back the hopes of those who sighed for the return of tranquillity and peace. Ireland, during the reigns of Henry IV., V. and VI., presents to the reader one uninterrupted scene of anarchy and confusion ; of predatory warfare, and retaliating violence ; of violated rights, and insatiable revenge ; of impolitic and absurd cruelty, and resolute and unconquerable patience ; of furious laws, and more furious resistance to those laws ; of narrow-sighted monopoly, and victorious rebellion. It appears that no calamity could teach wisdom or mercy to the rulers of Ireland ; and that the principle of extermination of the natives was the only mode within the understanding of the British cabinet, to preserve the English interests in Ireland.

Henry sent his son Thomas, Duke of Lancaster, to administer the affairs of Ireland, in the hope that a personage of such distinction would give weight and dignity to his government, and that the pride of those English barons, who could not brook an association with an humbler character than the son of a king, might in some degree be checked by the presence of the royal duke. The north is invaded by the Scotch ; who, supported by the native Irish, obtained some important settlements in that country. The Duke of Lancaster, anxious, if possible, to satisfy the complaints which were made to him by his subjects of the colony, of the oppressions and exactions under which they suffered, appointed commissioners to hold inquisition in several counties, to ascertain the names of the sufferers, and the actual damage they had sustained. Even the hope of redress tranquillized the public mind. Several of the Irish chieftains of Leinster renewed their submissions to the duke ; and the whole province being considered as restored to peace, a parliament was summoned at Castledermot, to consider of the most effectual means of repelling the Scotch invasion.

The citizens of Dublin and Drogheda collected their troops, and carried the marauding war to the coast of Scotland, where they amply revenged the depredations of the enemy. " Amidst all this parade and triumph," says Mr Leland, " the celebrated Arthur MacMurchad lay like a canker in the heart of the Leinster territory." This unwearied spirit was not to be soothed by concessions, nor intima-

ted by the sword. He despised the power of the English, and was indefatigable in seducing from their allegiance those chieftains who had submitted to the Duke of Lancaster. The deputy, aided by the arms of Ormond and Desmond, marched against him; and, after a furious battle, MacMurchad retreated, with a diminished though unconquered army. The English had no sooner repelled MacMurchad, than they were attacked from other quarters, and the impositions and exactions which such repeated contests with the native Irish induced, were so excessive, that the deputy found it necessary to put in force the provisions of the statute of Kilkenny.

The Duke of Lancaster, convinced of the necessity of the most vigorous and decisive measures, not only for the purpose of repelling with effect the common enemy, but also for restraining the insolent licentiousness of the great lords of his government, armed himself with powers more extensive than those he possessed when he first landed in Ireland. He insisted on an annual pension of one thousand marks, to render him independent of the precarious issues of the Irish revenue. But all the measures adopted by the Duke of Lancaster to preserve the peace of the colony were ineffectual, when opposed to the desperate valour of MacMurchad. The viceroy was pursued to the walls of Dublin, wounded, and forced to surrender his administration to Butler, the prior of St John of Jerusalem. Thus were the English abandoned to their own resources and expedients. The necessity of the times, and power

of the great lords, again imposed the torturing taxes of coyne and livery. The statute of Kilkenny was put in force; but, as the historian very properly observes, "such a statute was only politic or useful in case the parties putting it in force, were able to follow up, with the sword, the principles of extermination it enacted:" The Irish were too powerful, and the sanguinary statute of Kilkenny served but to recruit their ranks, and inflame their animosity; its absurd provisions were defeated by the circumstances of the colony; and the excluding and barbarous object of the legislator was counteracted by the weakness of the hand which was doomed to execute his law.

The colony, by this statute of Kilkenny, were prohibited from holding any commerce or traffic with the Irish enemy; but their richest and most flourishing towns were so environed with the native Irish, that they had no other people to trade with, and were often reduced, by legal restraints, to the danger of being utterly impoverished. Still so refined was the cruelty of English policy against the native Irish, that the very same malignity which dictated the statute of Kilkenny, recommended the act which would not permit the persecuted Irish to migrate. Thus, in the same moment, refusing to incorporate them with their own people, and denying them the opportunity of seeking peace and tranquillity in a foreign land.

By an act of the Irish parliament, in the eleventh year of Henry IV. it was ordained, that no native Irishman should be permitted to depart from the

realm, without special license, under the great seal of Ireland; and that the person and goods of an Irishman, attempting to transport himself without such licence, might be seized by any subject, who was to receive one moiety of the goods for such service, the other to be forfeited to the king. The devoted Irish would not be received as subjects, nor even suffered to leave their country, where perpetual persecution awaited them.—“This can appear in no other light,” says Mr Taaffe, “than a game-act; not unlike the act forbidding the transportation of hawks, under a penalty heavier than the eric allowed for the murder of twenty-four *mere* Irishmen, residing within English jurisdiction.”

Notwithstanding the ingenious cruelty with which the native Irish were hunted by the law-makers of the colony, it is consolatory to find that the effects of such legislation were as unprofitable as the policy was infamous; and that the English interests declined in exact proportion to the fury and multiplicity of their statutes against humanity and justice. The English were forced to the dishonourable refuge of paying to the victorious Irish the annual tribute called the black rent; thus recognizing the ancient sovereignty of the Irish chieftains, ministering to their pride, and gratifying their vengeance. Such has ever been the consequence of vicious and cruel counsels—defeat, poverty, and dishonour.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

HENRY V.

A.D. 1414. **THE** same melancholy scene of distress, turbulence, disaffection, oppression, and resistance, continues to weary our eyes until the arrival of Sir John Talbot, in the reign of Henry V. This Englishman was distinguished by his military abilities ; his vigorous and decisive character. Even the proud and intrepid MacMurchad bowed to his superior talents, and gave his son as an hostage for his peaceable demeanour. Other chieftains in the west and in the north, followed the example of Arthur MacMurchad. Though vigorous and able in his military achievements, and peculiarly successful in checking the progress of the common enemy, yet Sir John Talbot is handed down to posterity as partial, oppressive, and severe in the administration of his government. We find at this period a notable instance of the barbarous policy with which Ireland was pursued by the sister coun-

try. An act was passed by the English parliament, that all those Irish who wandered from their own country in search of that protection denied them in their native land, should immediately depart from the English territory ; and this infamous and inhospitable statute was not only directed against the poorest or the meanest of the Irish, but against the Irish students, who were contumeliously excluded from the British inns of court, lest the English people should be infected with the barbarous principles of the *wild and inhospitable Irish*. Such were the ignorant and insolent denunciations of a nation, at the moment it was outraging every feeling of the heart, and violating every law human and divine, against a people whom English historians record as the most generous, the most hospitable, the most social and warm-hearted on earth. So writes the venerable Bede, Keating, Camden, Sir John Davis, and every authority of respectability and veracity. We are not to wonder that those English viceroys who came over to Ireland, should have exercised their authority with insolence or with scorn, over a people whose characters and principles were represented in so odious and so horrible a light, nor should it excite our astonishment, that the national animosity should be extreme, after the laborious efforts of the enemies of Ireland to root out of its breast those sentiments of forgiveness or pardon, which are the offspring of generous hearts, and the grand characteristic of the Irish disposition.

So fallen were the Irish of the pale, as well as its

English inhabitants, and so completely at the mercy of their task-masters, that we find the chancellor Merbury, hardy enough to refuse affixing the seal to the petition framed by the old English settlers against the monopolizing avarice of their modern countrymen. Here we find a chancellor resisting the wishes of the parliament of the colony, composed of those very persons whose forefathers stifled the prayers of the native Irish.

There is a law of action, and re-action, pervading every department of nature; there is a law of retributive justice, in the moral system of intelligent beings, which the settlers experienced in an eminent and striking degree. All appointed to station and office were of English birth. Every English swarm of adventurers treated the settlers of Irish birth with the most mortifying contempt and injustice. Sir John Talbot, who encouraged this insidious and absurd policy, departed from the Irish administration with general execrations. His extortions, exactions and oppression, were balanced against his efforts to repel the common enemy of the pale, or to restore the latter to peace and tranquillity. He was succeeded by Ormond, who, being well disposed to redress the grievances of the pale, was popular among the English. A subsidy was granted, amounting to one thousand marks, accompanied as usual with a representation of grievances. The petition to the king was sent forward, and the archbishop of Armagh and Sir Christopher Preston were appointed agents to present it. This petition is a distressing picture of the injustice and

extortion suffered by the inhabitants of the pale. They say, between the terror of the common enemy, the native Irish, and the rapacious monopoly of the English viceroys and ministers, they passed a life of perpetual misery and torture. They impeached Stanley and Sir John Talbot. They pray that the chancellor Merbury may be cited before the throne, to answer for his insolent refusal to affix the seal to their petition. They complain in strong and emphatic language, that such a scene of various iniquities would be thus discovered, as were utterly abhorrent to the equity of the throne, and utterly intolerable to the subject. The effects of this petition were the removal of the odious chancellor, and the continuance of Ormond in the government, which gave general satisfaction by the mildness and kindness of his administration.

In this reign we find the odious passions of jealousy and rivalry, infecting and influencing the conduct of the higher order of the clergy of the pale. We see them bringing their disputes before the parliament, and charging each other with the most detestable crimes. An English bishop of Lismore accusing O'Hedían of Cashel of the most scandalous offences. These ecclesiastical contentions did not meet any very great countenance from the parliament.

The common enemy, as the native Irish were called, were always engaged in their contests for precedence and leadership among their respective septs. If a particular sept were in danger of total annihilation, and, as other annalists express it, "for

the sake of the Irish language," the neighbouring septs assembled to rescue their countrymen, and thus avenge the insult offered to Irish independence. The situation of Ireland, and her chieftains at this period, may be fairly illustrated by the species of affection which we sometimes see between men and their wives. Though some husbands correct their wives rather severely, they see no reason why a stranger should presume to indulge in the same liberty ; and the Irish chieftains, who frequently waged most merciless wars with each other, were indignant that the English colony should presume to follow their example.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND,

HENRY VI.

A. D. THE infancy of this monarch when he came 1420. to the throne, little contributed to the reformation of Ireland. The anarchy of English factions, the want of vigour in the Irish administration, left the colony exposed to the furious and jealous passions of its inhabitants, as well as to the unresisted incursions of the native Irish. Deputies were sent from England, who either incurred the contempt or hatred of the men they were to govern. The most disgraceful and infamous charges were brought against the viceroy, and solemn inquiries held before the parliament to prove their veracity. We see the country invaded with impunity by the Scotch, where they are retained and encouraged by the Irish chieftains, who gladly assist them in ravaging the English settlement. The administration of the Earl of Ormond rescued the colony, in a great degree, from the imminent

danger into which it was thrown by the imbecile conduct of former governors ; he abolished, in 1425, the yearly tribute of *black rent*, paid by the colony to the Irish chieftains. The same historian who relates the triumphs of Ormond over the Irish, in the next page cites a petition of the Irish parliament, representing to the king, that all the Irish enemies and English rebels are sworn to put his loyal people of the colony under tribute to them ; and that no part of Ireland remained unconquered by the Irish, but the county of Dublin. Mr Leland observes, for the honour of the colony, that the object of so humiliating a representation on the part of the Irish parliament, was for no other purpose than to gain supplies from England. The rapid declension of the English interests, suggested the necessity of enforcing the statutes against marrying, or fostering, or trafficking with the Irish.

The leading families of the old English settlers complain of the incapacity of the persons appointed to the viceregency of Ireland. They pray to be considered and treated as Englishmen, agreeably to their rightful claims, and the express stipulation of their ancestors. Hence the jealousies and animosities between Ormond, (the only nobleman of Irish birth in whom the crown confided,) and the Earls of Kildare and Desmond. The power of Desmond was so formidable, that he was able, by his influence, to remove from the government of Ireland, the popular Earl of Ormond, whose sentiments, Mr Leland says, were liberal, whose manners were polished, and for the purity and mild-

ness of whose administration, the most honourable testimonies were given. He was obliged to yield to the confederated power of his enemies, and Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, was sent into Ireland to take the reins of government.

Talbot came attended with a troop of 700 chosen men, and the Irish again rose in arms to oppose the new viceroy, aided by the Butlers, and the Berminghams, and the MacWilliams of Clanrickard. The Irish chieftains were reduced, and the most obnoxious among them, particularly of the sept of Bermingham, seized, condemned, and executed. A parliament was summoned by Talbot, in the year 1447, which again made it penal to conform to the Irish fashion of the hair and the beard. It was forbidden to use gold trappings, horse furniture or gilded harness, except by knights and prelates.

The administration of Richard, Duke of York, of which we are now about to give an account, demonstrates, if examples were wanting, how easy it is to govern Irishmen by the simple and unsophisticated principles of justice, kindness, and humanity; how productive that policy is which is guarded by a fair and impartial spirit, and how prolific to the rulers is the gratitude of a people who enjoy equal protection, equal law, and equal privileges. We have here a proof how a conciliating and equitable disposition can tranquillize a distracted state, and how impotent are the efforts of violence and of tyranny, compared with the soothing voice of parental government, which extends equal

protection to all, and impartially shelters under its wings the subjects who submit to it.

The scene we are now about to describe, cheers and animates the historian. It gives him hope that the prospect is brightening, and that the cloud which so long mildewed the fairest blossoms of his country, will soon be dispelled; that the native energies of Ireland are about to enjoy the sunshine of a pure and equitable government, which will enrich the hand that confers the benefit. The Duke of York, valiant, prudent, and temperate, was compelled, by the jealousy of the rival faction of Lancaster, to administer the affairs of Ireland. It would perhaps be an act of injustice to the memory of that excellent personage, to insinuate that the peculiar situation in which he stood, as the presumptive heir of the British crown, influenced his conduct as viceroy of Ireland; or that the kind and conciliating system on which he acted in the latter country, was prompted by the artifices of policy, and not by the dictates of an honest and manly understanding. Our experience of English government naturally inclines us to doubt the sincerity of Richard; but the mild and benevolent acts of his government obliterate the impression, and the historian who would write in candour should confidently hold up the heir of the house of York, as the model to future governors of Ireland, of wisdom, of moderation, and of justice.

The partizans of Lancaster were glad to seize upon any pretext by which they could be liberated from the watchful jealousy of so formidable a rival as Rich-

and Duke of York; and therefore represented Ireland as peculiarly demanding, from the turbulence and disorder which convulsed that country, the presence of so efficient a ruler. The duke, enjoying most extensive and powerful connections in Ireland, hoped that his absence from his own country would not much diminish his pretensions to the English crown; but in assuming the government of Ireland, he took care that he should be vested with almost unlimited power, and that the period of his administration should at least be ten years; that he should have a pension of two thousand marks from England, independent of his Irish revenue, and that he should have the power of appointing such officers as to him seemed most fit for their respective stations. He arrived in Ireland in the year 1449, and his appearance in this country was splendid and magnificent. In his deportment to all parties, he was conciliating and polite; he united the ease and cordiality of the companion, with the dignity of the prince, and even disarmed those of his Irish subjects who were prepossessed against his government. The opposing rival lords, Ormond and Osmond, he courted with equal success; and the followers of the reigning house of Lancaster seemed to forget the spirit of party, in their respect for the amiable and insinuating manners of the noble viceroy. In the various negotiations he had with the native Irish, he studiously recommended himself by his moderation and his equity. To his subjects of the colony he manifested the greatest zeal for their safety and tranquillity; and,

by no other power than that of a firm and undaunted determination to act impartially by all, did this excellent personage govern the colony with universal satisfaction and advantage. He convened a parliament at Dublin, in which various laws were passed for the security of the subject, and the prevention of oppression by the petty tyrant of the pale. Coin and coshierings were abolished. It was ordained that no lord should entertain more horse and footmen than he could support without burden to his neighbours. The number of the Duke's adherents multiplied every hour, and the popular voice of Ireland was universally resounding the praises of his mild and honest government; but such scenes of peace were not to last very long. This happy interval for Ireland was short and transient; and the great theatre of ambition in England demanded the immediate presence of Richard. He was succeeded by Sir Edward FitzEustace, under whose administration, though vigorous and decided, we are to witness the resurrection of these petty wars which convulsed the country. The native Irish chieftains of the west, the south, and the north, the O'Connors and the O'Neils, again rose in arms. They were checked by the strong and decided measures of FitzEustace. In the meantime the prospect in England became more and more gloomy. The general discontent increased, and the total loss of the French dominions roused and inflamed the public mind. The Duke of York openly declared for the throne, and the

victory gained by that Prince at St Alban's, put the British monarch in his possession.

The spirit of Margaret of Anjou, wife of the weak and impotent Henry VI. rose in proportion to the violence with which she was opposed ; and the battle of Bloreheath drove Richard for shelter to Ireland.* Here the reader of Irish history should

* A love of justice and obedience to the laws distinguished the Irish people in a more eminent degree than any other nation perhaps in the world. To this fact we have the most irresistible testimony. Sir John Davis, who observed this country with the eye of a philosopher as well as a lawyer, and who long resided in it as attorney-general, writes, " That no nation in the world loved impartial justice more than the Irish, though it should make against themselves." Lord Howth says, " The Irish obey the laws framed for them on their hills, better than the English do theirs, framed by parliament in walled towns." Mr Taaffe writes, (and this gentleman, from his intimate knowledge of the Irish language, and his industry in research, may be relied on by the Irish readers, as no bad authority on the following interesting facts), " The ancient Irish nation not only supplied themselves with all sorts of manufactures of necessity, but even of elegance, and exported besides. They enjoyed a flourishing agriculture, cloth, and linen manufacture ; iron and timber works, curious workmanship in gold and silver, a circumstance belonging to no other country in Europe. Their great monasteries, that were colleges, had botanic gardens. To their knowledge of astronomy some fragments of their books on astronomy, which we yet see, bear testimony ; their knowledge of this science was much greater before than after Christianity." Of the Irish language, Mr Taaffe says, " It was more copious and elegant than any contemporary language, which the remains of their compositions in prose and verse abundantly evince. The ancient Irish music was acknowledged by their bitterest enemies, incomparably superior to that of the neighbouring nations ; and the remains thereof preserved in Ireland, Scotland, and England, though plagiarised, leave no doubt on that head. If music be sentiment guided by harmony,

pause to consider and observe the effects of good and impartial government on the hearts of the Irish nation. Let the enemies of Ireland here stop to contemplate the reception which this country gave to that prince, under whom she enjoyed the blessings of equal law. Let the viceroys of Ireland learn from this example how to govern, so as to secure the loyalty and affection of the people.— Here we will find the Irish nation throwing them-

they possessed in the perfection of sublime simplicity, the most soul-moving melody ; never descending to the caterwauling semi-demiquivers of some farraginous, incongruous, unmeaning overtures. A passion for literature, especially history, poetry, and music, was so firmly grafted in the Milesians, that it could not be extirpated without the expiration of the nation. Every clan had hereditary lawyers, hereditary historians, hereditary physicians, hereditary bards, combining poetry and music. Thus family interest was engaged in the improvement and preservation of every art and profession. Every generation was sedulous to hand down the records, containing the rules and improvements of each profession, to their posterity. Hence the Danish wars of two hundred years, and the English and Irish wars of four hundred years continuance, were unable to pluck up the strong and deep roots of Irish learning, until the nation and it fell together ; even still there is no such general passion for learning to be found in the bulk of the people in any other country, working against a current of obstacles and oppressions." The fate of English literature was quite different, because it had not its roots in the constitution. The wars and policy of the Danes extirpated the learning which Ireland had planted ; so that until the Norman conquest, few barons could write their names. " In former times many farms and manors were given by bare word, without writing, only with the sword of the lord on his head-piece, with a lance or a standing goblet, and many tenements with a quill, with a horsecomb, with a bow, with an arrow." So writes Hayward in his life of William the conqueror.

selves between their benefactor and his enemies, and, with all the ardour of the most grateful affection, offering their lives and fortunes in his defence. This was not the extortion of monopoly ; it was the kind offering of the heart overflowing with gratitude, and burning for the opportunity to give expression to its sensibility. Writs were sent over to Ireland to bring Richard to justice, but the Irish parliament answered those writs in the memorable language, " that it had ever been customary in their land, to receive and entertain strangers with due support and hospitality." The same assembly soon after enacted laws for the preservation of the duke's person. They declared that Ireland was only to be governed by laws enacted by the king, lords, and commons of Ireland ; that this realm hath also its constable and marshal, before whom all appeals are to be made. Richard is again encouraged to embark for England. Backed by the men and treasure of Ireland, he arrived in London, and was declared by the British Parliament successor to Henry. Margaret prepared to oppose him, and the battle of Wakefield, in which Richard opposed the royal army with a disproportioned force, terminated his life, and the hopes of the party.

The result of this celebrated action shook to its centre the English interest in Ireland, and the colony was again assailed on all sides by the incursions of the surrounding chieftains. Tributes were again imposed and paid by the colony, and thus a partial peace was purchased. O'Neil in the north,

O'Brien and MacCarty in the south, received those annual tributes. Thus did the various fluctuation of the houses of York and Lancaster operate with malignant and cruel effect on the peace and comforts of the Irish people, as well as the English colony.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

EDWARD III.

A. D. **THE** reign of Edward affords to the reflecting mind, few materials from which either
1461. instruction or entertainment may be derived. It exhibits a painful picture of vindictive triumph and party fury, of narrow contracted policy with regard to Ireland, and avaricious rapacity with regard to the colony.

George, Duke of Clarence, was created viceroy on the accession of Edward; and the adherents of the house of York were honoured with new distinctions, and increased confidence. Sir Rowland FitzEustace was created baron of Portlester, and Sir Robert Barnwall baron of Trimbleston. The Earl of Ormond first fell a victim to the vengeance of the Yorkists, and an act of attainder was passed by the Irish parliament against the family of Butler in 1462, for adhering to the king's enemies. Sir John Ormond, brother of the late earl, fled into

Munster, and took up arms against the deputy. The house of Desmond oppose him, and, after a furious engagement, Ormond received a disastrous overthrow. The triumphant Desmond was now appointed viceroy, and, elated with his exaltation, the pride of his demeanour peculiarly mortified his enemies. The sept of Melachlin, the ruling Irish family of Meath, were at this time invaded by one of the most ancient English settlers, called Petit, from whom the family of the Marquis of Lansdown flow. The sept rose in arms; and Desmond having supported the claims of Petit, the neighbouring clans flew to the relief of Melachlin, routed the army of the deputy, and took the latter prisoner, with most of his distinguished followers. The Earl of Desmond fell into the hands of an honourable enemy; and, as if mortified by the generous treatment he experienced, it was during his administration we find the most cruel and fiend-like enmity manifested towards the native Irish. Desmond being restored to his government by the generosity of an enemy who despised his power, did not provide against the dangers which threatened the English interests on all sides of the pale. The sept of O'Brien issued from the south, crossed the Shannon, and expelled the English settlers of Munster. They peaceably negotiated with the native Irish in Leinster, Arghial, and Breffney (or Cavan), and hung over the English pale with dreadful denunciations. The Irish chieftains were content with forcing the common enemy to the disgraceful payment of tribute; and, as usual, retired within their respective ter-

ritories, without striking at the root of the sufferings of their country. Such mortifying defeats and indignities exposed Desmond to much obloquy, and afforded peculiar triumph to his enemies.

The bishop of Meath charges Desmond with oppression and extortion, and both parties send forward their respective representations to the British monarch. The Irish parliament address the king in favour of Desmond, and implore his majesty to give no credence to any accusers of the earl. With such honourable testimonials, Desmond presents himself before Edward, silences the accusations of his opponents, and returns to Ireland to indulge a thoughtless triumph over his enemies.

In 1465, we find this deputy, with his catholic parliament of the pale, enacting laws which at once excite our indignation and our ridicule; sanguinary and absurd, impotent and furious—the offspring of folly and malignity. The torments they give birth to, turn on the inventor; and the catholic English colony will hereafter be seen suffering in property and in person from those very laws that were directed by them against the devoted Irish. They passed an act setting a price upon the heads of Milesians going from, or coming into, any part of the pale, if he or they be not in company with an Englishman of good repute, wearing English apparel. They also passed an act, that every Irishman living among the English settlers, shall change their surnames, speak English, and wear English apparel. They enacted that no ship or other vessel of any foreign country shall go for fish to Irish

counties. What spirit prompted this infernal confederacy against the laws of God and humanity? Was it religion or superstition? No. Was it because the Irish were a barbarous nation? No; this cannot be urged by such legislators.—Why did this catholic pale thus endeavour to make the humane and tender, savage and ferocious—the hospitable Irishman, the merciless barbarian? The Irish reader will immediately answer—because England so ordered it; because the monopoly of the pale which she either wickedly or foolishly cherished, was insatiable for Irish blood, and should be gratified. Could a protestant parliament enact laws more barbarous than these we have quoted by a catholic parliament? Certainly not; but a protestant parliament has followed the footsteps of this catholic parliament, and has obeyed the instructions of England with equal fidelity.

Irishmen should never confound the errors of their countrymen with the crimes of England, nor contend with each other when the prolific source of all Ireland's wrongs stands before them. Yet Mr Leland writes of this parliament, that “the statutes it passed were particularly calculated not only for the defence of the pale, but for the refining the manners of its inhabitants, and forming them by the English model.” Mr Leland's idea of refinement is somewhat singular, if it can only be brought about by the establishment of principles which tear from the human breast the finest feelings of our nature, proclaim war against our neigh-

bour, and level humanity with the beast of the field, or the fowl of the air.

The deputy, Desmond, who thus *refined* the manners of the Irish, shortly after his honourable labours, was brought to the block by his enemies. Kildare repaired to the British monarch, and made such representations as restored the family of the Geraldines to their ancient power and authority. The Irish parliament co-operate with Kildare in visiting on the enemies of his house the most merciless vengeance. The temporary revolution effected in England by the Earl of Warwick restoring Henry VI. to the throne, left Kildare undisturbed in the government of the English colony. "The measures he adopted," says Mr Taaffe, "for the defence of the pale, demonstrate the nullity of its resources, and that it was not power, but will, the ancient proprietors wanted, to pluck that deleterious thorn out of their side."

The reader will find but little entertainment in perusing the detail of the family quarrels of the Butlers and Fitzgeralds. A native of England is appointed deputy by Edward IV. without consulting the colonists. He was opposed and disowned; Kildare kept the lieutenancy; Keating, governor of the castle, refused him entrance; Kildare formed an alliance with Con O'Nial of the north, which fixed and established his influence, and made it almost imperative on the British monarch to retain him as deputy. He continued viceroy during the reigns of Edward V. and Richard III. a period which affords no subject to the historian worthy of

record. We read the same round of internal feuds and animosities, terminating in civil war and blood, and the same scenes of violence to perpetuate and extend the English interests, without regard to the obligations of justice, of humanity, or religion.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

HENRY VII.

A. D. **THE** triumphs of Henry VII. over the
1480. House of York, were heard in Ireland with feelings of deep and sincere regret. The vices of Richard III. were unknown and unexperienced, and the virtues of his ancestor lived in the grateful recollection of the Irish nation. It would be reasonably expected, that the policy of the conqueror would have suggested the expediency of placing in the administration of his Irish government, the partizans of the house of Lancaster; but, whether from fear, or from a more profound policy, he continued the friends of the house of York in the enjoyment of all the honours and emoluments of the vice-regal administration. He reposed confidence in the Earl of Kildare as lord lieutenant, and the brother of the earl as his Irish chancellor. Rowland, lord Portlester, another zealous Yorkist, continued treasurer, with all the old

officers of state, and former privy council. Were we to form an opinion of the motive which actuated Henry to preserve the ministers of York in the administration of Ireland, we should be inclined to conclude, that the formidable power of the English lords of the pale, who were devoted to the interests of the house of York, could more easily be gained over by the affected confidence of the monarch, than restrained or put down by the violence of his jealousy, or the terror of his arms.

The desperate resistance of Keating, the prior of Kilmainham, to the appointment of Lumley, who was selected by Henry to succeed him in his ecclesiastical dignities, fully demonstrates the strength of the York party in Ireland. Keating ordered Lumley to be seized and thrown into prison, in opposition to the threats of Henry. The Earl of Kildare governed in Ireland without any restraint, even from the rivalry or the jealousy of the great barons of the colony. Desmond slumbered in the lazy pride of rude magnificence; he boasted of his exemption from the labours of legislation, and left the administration of the colony to the sole direction of Kildare. In England, the British monarch manifested the most relentless and unforgiving spirit against the house of York. The young Earl of Warwick, son of the unhappy Duke of Clarence, was committed to close custody,—the daughter of Edward was treated with coldness and neglect by her husband Henry,—and the friends of the Yorkists were pursued on all sides by attainders, forfeitures, and confiscations.

The widow of Edward IV. could no longer repress her indignation at the treatment of her daughter, the relentless persecutions of her friends, and the unwearied spirit with which Henry insulted the feelings of the family. She secretly consulted with his enemies, and industriously encouraged the disposition to disaffection throughout the kingdom.

Henry having received information from Ireland, which excited his apprehensions of the fidelity of Kildare, he summoned the latter to repair to his court; who artfully evaded the royal mandate, by a parliamentary representation of the dangers to be incurred by his absence from the administration of Irish affairs. At length, the suspicions of Henry were confirmed by the developement of a scheme conceived by an ecclesiastic of Oxford, to make an experiment on the disaffection of Henry's subjects. Richard Lemon, a monk of Oxford, prevailed on a youth called Lambert Simnel, to represent the Earl of Warwick, who, as report stated, had escaped from confinement. Simnel, being possessed of considerable address, personated the young earl with so much success, that he was adopted by persons of the highest consequence and distinction, as a fit instrument by which an effort could be made to effect a revolution of the government. Though Simnel sustained his part with ease and dignity, Ireland (a country where the young Warwick was least known, and where a discovery of the imposition was least probable), was considered by the conspirators as the fittest theatre on which this cu-

rious and interesting drama ought to be acted. The national zeal of Ireland for the house of York pointed out that country as the certain asylum of Warwick, and the grand support on which he might rely to advance his pretensions to the throne.

Simnel, and his attendant the monk, arrived in Dublin, where he was received with all the warmth of a people grateful for the services rendered to them by his ancestor. The whole colony, with some few exceptions, embraced his cause. Kildare summoned the council. Simnel was conveyed in pomp to the castle of Dublin; received the homage and acclamations of his numerous adherents, with the most gracious dignity; was entertained and treated as a sovereign, and in a few days publicly proclaimed king, by the name of Edward VI.

Henry, who was considerably alarmed at the extraordinary scene then acting in his Irish dominions, proceeded to take such steps as were calculated to check the growing danger. He seized the queen dowager, who was supposed to be the principal agent in the conspiracy, and committed her to a nunnery. To demonstrate the imposition practised on his subjects by the artifices of his enemies, he ordered the real Earl of Warwick to be taken from the Tower and conducted through the streets of London, where he conversed with some of the principal nobility. The zeal of the Irish colony for the house of York, retorted upon the king the charge of imposition, and upbraided in their turn the credulity of the English nation, who refused to acknowledge Simnel as the real Earl of Warwick. Emissaries

repaired to England to sound the disposition and ascertain the numbers of those who were ready to vindicate and support the claims of the house of York. Ambassadors were sent to the Duchess of Burgundy, the sister of Edward IV., who saw with mortification the prosperity and triumphs of the Lancastrians, Francis, Lord Lovel, chamberlain of Richard, and John, Earl of Lincoln, whom Richard III. designed to leave as his successors to the throne, were at that time resident at the court of the Duchess of Burgundy. They immediately embraced the cause of Simnel, and landed in Ireland in the year 1487, with a force of 2000 Flemish troops, under the command of Swaart, a valiant and experienced officer. Animated by such support, the colonists proceeded to the coronation of Simnel. He was conducted in due state to Christ-church, attended by the lord deputy and his officers of state; the Bishop of Meath explained and enforced his right to the crown, even from the pulpit. From the church he was conveyed in pomp to the castle of Dublin, elevated on the shoulders of D'Arcy, chief of a considerable English family of Meath; a ceremony, Mr Leland says, adopted from the native Irish.

The young king convened a parliament; subsidies were granted; the whole administration of government, the procedure of law, and execution of justice, passed some time regularly in the name of Edward VI.

The state of the colony at this period was (even according to colonial writers) very circumscribed;

it seemed to exist rather from the sufferance of the native Irish chieftains, than by its own strength. The names of Kildare, Desmond, and Ormond, commanded respect more as Irish princes, than English lords; more from their connections with the native Irish, to whom they were now a good deal assimilated in manners, than as the descendants of those English barons who invaded Ireland; the resources of the deputy's treasury were inadequate to the expense of a large military establishment; and it ceased, therefore, to be a matter of choice whether he should determine on the invasion of England, aided by Flemish allies. The invasion of England was determined upon, and Simnel, with his allies, landed in Lancashire, at a place called Foudery.

Henry lost no time in endeavouring to repel the invaders. He met the Irish at a village called Stoke, in Nottingham. The desperate valour of the Irish, aided by the discipline of the German veterans, kept the battle a long time doubtful. At length victory declared for Henry. The gallant Swaart, Lord Lovel, Sir Thomas Broughton, and a number of distinguished Irishmen, fell on the field of battle. Among the prisoners were Simnel, and his tutor the priest, who thus closed their short career of imposture and fraud. Henry spared Simnel's life, but consigned him to the menial offices of his kitchen, where he might be the subject of public derision and contempt. Lemon, the clergyman, was thrown into prison, and it is supposed, sacrificed to the vengeance of Henry. Thus terminated one

of the most singular impositions ever practised on a whole nation in the annals of history. This dream of the English colony closed in the most mortifying disappointment and disaster. The vengeance of Henry was averted by the timely acknowledgments of error on the part of Kildare and the principal barons; and the king, pressed by more important considerations in his own country, seized the opportunity the repentance of his subjects offered, and granted amnesty for past offences. The dependence of Henry on the barons of the colony to repel the more formidable efforts of the Irish, who were anxious to extinguish the English interests in Ireland, obliged him to dissemble his indignation at the late effort of his Irish subjects to drive him from his throne.

Soon after, Henry commissioned Sir Richard Edgecombe to go to Ireland, in order that he might there tender the royal pardon to such as would renew their oaths of allegiance. After some remonstrance from Kildare, and a few of the principal barons of the pale, the latter agreed to perform homage and fealty to Henry in the most public manner. Accordingly the Lords Portlester, Gorleston, Slane, Howth, Trimbleston, and Dunsany took the oaths of allegiance. The prelates and abbots of Dublin submitted in like manner. The only persons to whom the royal favour was denied were Plunket, Chief Justice, and Keating, the prior of Kilmainham, who were particularly obnoxious from their distinguished zeal in the cause of the impostor Simnel.

In consequence of the jealousies which arose between Kildare, who took up arms against his monarch, and those barons who had continued faithful in their allegiance, Henry summoned the contending lords to his court, where he exhibited the mock prince, Simnel, in the capacity of butler ; thus mortifying the Irish lords by representing the idol before whom they bent the knee, reduced to the humble and degrading situation of servant to the monarch whom they threatened to depose.

The result of the interview with the English monarch was the reconciliation of all parties. The Irish were dismissed with confidence and assurances of the royal favour. The south and the north of Ireland were disturbed by the struggles of the Earl of Desmond with the O'Carrols of Thomond, and the MacCartys of Desmond, over whom he gained two great victories, which, though not immediately contributing to extend the territories of the colony, had the effect of weakening and dividing the Irish force, and exposing the country hereafter to the more subtle practices of its enemies. In the north, the O'Nials and Tyrconnells waged a sanguinary and destructive war, which the interposition of the deputy could not prevent. About this time a second impostor rose up, called Perkin Warbeck, whose pretensions were encouraged by the intriguing Duchess of Burgundy. Henry seeing the storm approach, took all necessary precautions to guard against its effects. He removed Kildare from the Irish administration, and with him all those officers whom he had reason to suspect favourable to the new conspiracy. Such a change in the government

of Ireland generated all the malignant passions of jealousy and envy among the principal barons of the pale ; and Ormond and Kildare sacrificed to their mutual hatred the solid interests of their sovereign, and the tranquillity and happiness of the colony. Ireland was thus torn by contending factions, when Perkin Warbeck made his appearance in the character of Richard Plantagenet, who was supposed to have escaped from the Tower. He was received with all the honours due to that young prince. The result, however, of the efforts of this impostor in Ireland, were little more than the multiplication of those fruitless struggles between the great barons, which desolated the colony. In addition to those calamities, Ireland was visited with the sweating sickness, a species of malady that raged with horrible fury in London at this period ; and which, Mr Hume says, was not propagated by any contagious infection, but arose from the general disposition of the air, and of the human body—thousands fell victims to it.

The complaints made to Henry of Irish distress and suffering were so great, that he summoned Walter, the archbishop of Dublin, to appear before him with a clear and satisfactory detail of the causes of the calamities under which Ireland then laboured. The archbishop appeared before his monarch, who demanded the reason why “so little advantage had been hitherto derived from the acquisitions of his predecessors in Ireland, notwithstanding the natural wealth and fruitfulness of that country ?” It is written, that the answer of the bishop discovered neither integrity nor penetration. Like many An-

glo-Irishmen who have succeeded him, he fled for refuge from the honest inquiries of his sovereign, to the senseless calumny of the country which he presumed to represent : he told the king the people of Ireland were an idle, wandering, and turbulent people ; and that even the English colony in that country were diseased with the destructive habits of the Irish.

The representations of the bishop had the effect of gratifying the vengeance, if not of healing the wounds of Ireland ; and Kildare, the powerful, was obliged to yield to the stern rebuke of the monarch, who was now better enabled, by his circumstances in England, to act a decided part in the government of his Irish dominions. He therefore selected Sir Edward Poynings, as the person best qualified to extinguish the insolent tyranny of the factious lords. He invested this knight with unlimited powers to hear all complaints, to punish the guilty, and reward the meritorious, as his judgment pointed out. No confidence was reposed by Henry in any of his Irish officers of the colony. He substituted in their places Englishmen of the highest character, and thus determined to strike at the root of that torturing monopoly, which enriches itself with the tears and the miseries of the people it rules over.

Henry sent over an English lord chancellor, an English lord treasurer, English judges and law officers. All embarked with Sir Edward Poynings, and, on his arrival, were sworn of the privy council. It is instructive to observe the effort made by

Henry at this period to establish such an administration in his colony in Ireland, as would render that country in some degree less formidable, and more productive to the royal treasury, than it had heretofore been. It is curious to observe the little shiftings of a narrow and envious policy, and to remark how slow is the progress of that enlightened spirit of legislation, which sees sincere loyalty in the communication of benefit, and estimates the returns of the heart by the magnitude of the privilege conferred. We have hitherto seen England balancing Ormond against Desmond, the north against the south ; we are now to see her distrusting all parties, and endeavouring to govern the colony on their ruins.

The reflections of Mr Leland are too valuable not to be introduced, even in this compendium of Irish history. “ The late transactions in Ireland, the bold attempt in favour of Simnel, and the desperate valour displayed by the troops led into England by the Geraldines, had made this country the subject of general discourse and speculation ; and the rising spirit of project and inquiry had engaged individuals to search deeply into the revolutions experienced in Ireland since the reign of Henry II. The declension of the English interests, the dispositions, temper, and power of the old natives, the designs and competitions of great lords, the conduct of the king’s officers, and the means of rendering an appendage to the crown of England, in itself so valuable, of real weight and consequence to the general weal.” There is a discourse still ex-

tant in some repositories of curious papers, said to have been presented to the king and council, not later than the present period, in which the affairs of Ireland are copiously examined. The author labours to engage the king in the complete reduction and settlement of this country; his researches are accurate, and his policy judicious. He recounts no less than 60 regions, of different dimensions, all governed by Irish chieftains, after their laws and manners; together with a long catalogue of degenerate English, who had renounced all obedience to government in the several provinces. The pale of English law he confines within the narrow bounds of half the counties of Uriel, Meath, Kildare, Dublin, and Wexford; and the common people of those districts he represents as entirely conforming to the Irish habit and language, although they professed obedience to the laws; so general had been the intercourse of fostering, marriage, and alliance with the enemy. The grievances of those counties, from oppressive exactions, unnatural feuds, expeditions undertaken by deputies from personal animosity or private interest, to the utter ruin of the subject, and without the least advantage to the state; laws forgotten, neglected, and defied; an increasing degeneracy, a general ignorance, and scandalous inattention to instruct and reform the people, are all detailed fully.

The remedies proposed are—a competent force sent out of England, to support the authority of a chief governor of integrity and equity; a strict attention to the training the people to the English art of

war; garrisons stationed so as to awe the Irish enemies and rebels, to put an end to local quarrels, and gradually to reduce the whole body of the inhabitants to obedience; equitable and moderate taxation, substituted in the place of arbitrary impositions: with other particular regulations, many of which were afterwards adopted.—(*Pandarus sive latus populi. M. S. Trin. Col. Dub.*) Such remains of antiquity are not unworthy of notice, as the sentiments and opinions of cotemporaries serve to illustrate and confirm the representations collected from history or records.

In this instrument, we do not find any recommendation to extend the protection of the constitution—to impart its advantages—to cultivate confidence—to promote social and friendly intercourse with the natives—to exhibit a disposition kind and affectionate, to a people most sensible to such endearing sentiments. No; we see more new friends from England recommended: more strong measures, more national distrust. Still it must be acknowledged that throughout this document a milder spirit of equity is discernible than we have before witnessed; and that from this period we may date the dawn of that day which discovered to Englishmen the great and paramount importance of Ireland as a member of the British empire.

The arrival of Sir Edward Poynings in Ireland, promised no extraordinary extension of the colonial territory: his mission seemed to be more directed to a reformation of the colony itself, than the subjugation of the native Irish; and the merit of ex-

tinguishing the wretched factions of the pale, which were eating up the resources of the Irish nation, was reserved for Sir Edward Poynings, whose character and whose talents were particularly calculated to accomplish so desirable an object.

The policy of this chief governor was nothing less than that of the general and extensive reformation of the state ; to put an end to the iniquity of ministers, and the oppositions of the people, as well as to extinguish every remaining spark of disaffection and rebellion. Sir Edward Poynings was opposed by an Irish chieftain named O'Hanlon, in such and so effectual a manner as calls up the anger and contemptible resentment of some colonial writers, at what they call the cowardly warfare of the Irish.

Mr Leland says, that Sir Edward Poynings found the Irish an embarrassing, though not a very honourable enemy. In what did the want of Irish honour consist ? In taking advantage of the various retreats their country afforded, they kept their enemy in perpetual terror and anxiety, without striking a decisive blow ; and thus the Irish defeated the hopes of this aspiring deputy, who was to have conquered the barbarous Irish with so much facility. Sir Edward Poynings was determined that his legislative war against the vices of his subjects of the pale, should obliterate the remembrance of his unsuccessful struggles against the native Irish ; and accordingly, in 1495 he convened a parliament, which commenced the enactment of those laws that were well calculated to curb the licentiousness of the co-

lonial barons, and to liberate the people from those oppressive exactions which the former imposed to such intolerable excess. The taxes paid by the people of the pale were defined, and the power of the nobles was bounded and circumscribed by the law. This parliament of Sir Edward Poynings assimilated the laws of the pale with those of England; for instance, in the important and paramount case of murder, they were forbidden to prosecute the offender in the old Irish method of compelling his sept to pay a fine, but to proceed regularly according to the English law; and this crime of murder, by a severity most expedient and necessary, in times of turbulence, was declared to be high treason. Besides some statutes against individuals, we find, in the proceedings of this famous parliament, an act of attainder passed against Gerald Fitzthomas, Earl of Kildare, for treason and rebellion, corresponding with O'Hanlon, practising the extortion of coyne and livery, and intriguing with the king of the Scots. The vengeance of Sir Edward's parliament was extended to all his adherents and kinsmen, of whom we find a long catalogue attainted of high treason, so as to reduce this noble family, which had so long maintained the first rank in Ireland, to the lowest state of depression and disgrace.

So suspected were the inhabitants of the colony by this chief governor, that it was determined none but English should be entrusted with the care of the principal places of strength, throughout the whole English settlements; and the turbulent and

sedition conduct of the prior of Kilmainham, Keating, suggested another statute, by which an Englishman alone was to be invested with the priory of St John of Jerusalem.

The most memorable law enacted by the parliament of Sir Edward Poynings, and of which English historians have deigned to take some notice, is the law called Poynings' law. The principal provision of which is as follows :—" Whereas many statutes lately made within the realm of England would contribute to the wealth and prosperity of Ireland, if used and executed in the same, it is ordained and established by the authority of parliament, and by the assent of the lords and commons, that all statutes lately made within the realm of England, belonging to the public weal of the same, be deemed good and effectual in law, accepted, used, and executed within this land of Ireland; authorised, approved, and confirmed." Lord Bacon calls this a memorable law, and the first provision for making the statutes of England in force in Ireland; but, as Mr Leland observes, the same provision is made by a statute of the 7th of Edward IV. and the terms of the statute of Poynings contradicts and refutes the idea that the Irish colony resigned their rights to England of making laws for the regulation of its own people. But there was another law, called Poynings' law also, which roused the indignation and fired the pride of Ireland, at a great and memorable period of its history. It is called an act " that no parliament

be holden in Ireland, until the acts be certified into England.”*

The parliament of Sir Edward Poynings yielded to the malignant jealousies of the rivals of Kildare, and pursued that prince with an implacable hosti-

* Sir John Davis, in his celebrated speech to the Irish House of Lords, in the reign of James I., on his appointment to the situation of speaker or chairman of the commons, makes the following observations on this celebrated law of Poynings :—“ In the tenth year of Henry VII. Sir Edward Poynings summoned and held that famous parliament, in which, doubtless, he showed a large heart, and a great desire of a general reformation; and, to that end, procured many general laws to pass, which we find most profitable and necessary for the commonwealth at this day.

“ Among the rest he caused two laws to be made, which may rightly be called *leges legum*, being excellent laws, concerning the laws themselves, whereof one did look backwards to the time past, and gave a great supply to the defects of former parliaments, by confirming and establishing at once in this realm, all the statutes formerly made in England.

“ The other looked forward to the time to come, by providing, that from thenceforth there should be no parliament holden here until the acts which should be propounded were first certified into England, and approved by the king and his council there, and then returned hither, under the great seal of that realm.

“ This latter act,” says Sir John Davis, “ is that we call Poynings’ act, and is, indeed, that act of parliament which is a rule for our parliaments until this day.

“ But these acts,” continued Sir John Davis, “ by Sir Edward Poynings, though they were made and meant for the general good, and gave, indeed, the first overture for the general reformation that hath followed since that time, yet could they not produce so good and so great an effect as was intended by those laws; because that more than three parts in four of this kingdom at least, were then and long after possessed by the Irish, and unreformed English, which were not answerable to the law.”

lity. Sir Edward declined to take cognizance of the various accusations that were so industriously made against Kildare, and sent him prisoner to the British monarch, before whom he should meet the charges of his enemies. Thus the great and leading enemy of the English was put into the possession of Henry ; and Sir Edward Poynings, after the triumphant establishment of his celebrated civil institutions, returned to England, where he was rewarded by his sovereign for his services in Ireland, with the honour of the garter.

The bishop of Bangor succeeded Sir Edward Poynings in the administration of Ireland. During his government, the native Irish, and the degenerate English, were consuming and destroying each other by perpetual contests. In the mean time, his secret and public enemies were busy in their endeavours to poison the mind of Henry against Kildare, who was at length summoned before the British monarch, to answer the host of accusers who were pledged to confront him. The honest, open, and candid demeanour of Kildare won the esteem of Henry, and constituted his best defence against his accusers. An anecdote is told of this Irish nobleman, which illustrates his character in a very striking and remarkable manner. The king desired Kildare to be prepared for his defence, and to provide himself with able counsel, as he feared his cause would require it.—“ Yes, the ablest in the realm,” replied the earl, seizing Henry by the hand, with an uncourtly familiarity ; “ your highness I take for my counsel against these false

knaves." The king smiled at the novelty of this address, and the uncouth compliment to his equity and discernment; his accusers were heard, and, among the numerous accusations which were made against him, there was one which called forth a reply, the simplicity, and candour and manliness of which, at once excited the admiration and astonishment of Henry. Kildare was charged with sacrilegiously burning the church of Cashel to the ground. "Spare your evidence," said Kildare, "I *did* set fire to the church, for I thought the bishop had been in it." His accusers closed their charge with a warm and passionate declaration, that "all Ireland could not govern this earl." "Well, then," replied Henry, "this earl shall govern all Ireland."

Thus the triumph of Kildare was complete; he was restored to his estates and honours, and soon after created viceroy of Ireland. In this situation he displayed that vigilance and activity, which, aided by the late regulations of Sir Edward Poynings, were well calculated to give permanency to the English interests in Ireland. Connected by family ties with the O'Nials of the north, he quelled his opponents in that quarter, and forced them to a submission. He subdued the south, and conciliated the heads of the principal families—the archbishop of Armagh and the Prince of Ormond. He formed alliances with the most powerful chieftains, and gave his daughter to Uliac of Clanrickard, a powerful lord of Connaught. This Irish chieftain did not treat the daughter of Kildare in a manner

suited to her birth and character ; and the earl resented the indignity by declaring war against Clanrickard, which terminated in one of the most sanguinary battles recorded in Irish annals. Clanrickard was joined by O'Brien, and some Irish associates of Munster. Those of the pale, united with the deputy, were reinforced by O'Nial, his kinsman, and other northern dynasties.

Though the cause of difference between the Earl of Kildare and the Earl of Clanrickard was completely a private one, yet, on this occasion, the entire forces of the colony and of the Irish chieftains were drawn forth, as if the question to be decided was the liberty or the slavery of Ireland. The two armies met at Knoctore, within five miles of Galway, (1492,) and the Irish sustained a dreadful defeat from the superior generalship and skill of Kildare. So pleasing was the information of this great victory to Henry, that he immediately conferred the garter on the Earl of Kildare. The result of this battle was the surrender of Galway and Athunree.

Mr Leland says, that from this reign we may date the first revival of the English power in Ireland, which, from the Scottish war, in the reign of Edward II. had gradually declined into a miserable and precarious state of weakness. The connections which were formed by the Earl of Kildare with the principal Irish chieftains, the activity and generosity of his disposition, the vigour of his arms, and the fidelity of his zeal, established the power of the English crown more firmly than we have hitherto

seen it. Though the pale was not extended, it was secured more effectually than in former reigns ; and though the ignominious tribute paid by the English colony was not withdrawn, yet, from the family connection of the deputy with the principal Irish chieftains, the influence of the English became more extensive than it hitherto had been. Those of the English whose manners and habits became completely Irish, or who, in the language of Mr Leland, had degenerated into the barbarous character of the Irish, were more hostile to the increase of English influence than even the natives themselves. Mr Leland attributes this degeneracy to a lawless spirit of riot and disorder ; but, at the same time, admits, that it may be reasonably imputed to the weakness of English government, and to that good-natured sociability and hospitality by which the Irish were distinguished. The laws forbade all intermarrying with the Irish, but laws were insignificant barriers against the propensities of humanity, and the power of mutual intercourse and affection. Even within the pale, at this period, the Irish manners and language were predominant ; so little progress did England make, by the fury of her policy, or the terror of her arms, among the Irish people.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

HENRY VIII.

A. D. 1509. **T**HE accession of Henry VIII. was productive of little advantage to Ireland. The gaiety of youth, and the influence of adulation, the pride and pomp of royal dignity, the vain pursuit of empty glory in foreign wars and negotiations, the intrigues of foreign courts, their poverty and their venality, the flatteries of the emperor Maximilian, and of Ferdinand of Spain, called off the attention of Henry from the more useful occupation of looking to the settlement of his Irish dominions, and the firm establishment of his power in that valuable member of his empire.

The Earl of Kildare was continued the viceroy of Ireland, and was perpetually engaged in restraining the turbulent and factious spirit of the native Irish, who were no sooner suppressed in one corner of the island, than they rose up in another. At length the death of this celebrated nobleman, in the

year 1513, produced a general sentiment of terror among the friends of English government. In this critical emergency, the council and nobles elected Gerald, the son of the late earl, lord deputy, who manifested the same spirit and energy in the suppression of rebellion, which distinguished his father.

After Gerald had completely restored tranquillity and security to the English colony, he sailed for England to receive further orders from his sovereign. He soon returned, and convened a parliament. In this parliament a subsidy of thirteen shillings on every plowland was granted for ten years to the king. Absentees were heavily taxed, and the use of archery by the colony particularly enforced. Notwithstanding the vigorous and decisive policy with which Gerald had administered the affairs of this colony, the envy and jealousy of a rival family were destined to counteract all his efforts, and again plunge the people into new convulsions.

Thomas Earl of Ormond died at this period, and Peter or Piers Butler succeeded to his immense estates. He saw with impatience the rising power of the family of the Geraldines, and adopted every stratagem which the most ingenious policy could devise, to undermine the house of Kildare in the estimation and confidence of the British monarch. The result was, that Kildare was summoned to answer to the charges that were brought by his enemies.

At this period Henry VIII. was at leisure to devote his mind to the consideration of his Irish affairs; and Cardinal Wolsey pointed out the necessity of no longer confiding in the administration of an Irish viceroy, if his majesty wished to put an end to the feuds and factions with which Ireland had been perpetually distracted;—that a neutral person, a nobleman in no manner connected with the parties and competitions which so long lacerated the country, was the most likely to restore tranquillity, and speedily effect the complete reduction of the common enemy. The present circumstances of Henry with relation to foreign powers, were particularly favourable to the experiment which his minister suggested. He had concluded his treaty with France. Louis had been succeeded by Francis I. Charles V. had not only succeeded to the crown of Spain, but was advanced to the imperial dignity. Henry was courted by those great rivals; he had the honour of being considered the arbitrator of Europe, and his kingdom of England was in profound tranquillity. Such were the circumstances of Henry, when Wolsey called his attention to his Irish dominions.—Thomas, Earl of Surry, was appointed viceroy of Ireland. Kildare was thus removed from the Irish administration, and his enemies gratified.

The Earl of Surry had no sooner assumed the reins of power, than he was compelled to take the field against Con O’Nial, distinguished among his countrymen by the title of *boccagh*, or the limper. The latter, finding that Surry was better prepared for resistance than he had at first supposed, sent an

embassy to the deputy, and disavowed all intention of hostility. Mr Leland says that this submission of so powerful a chieftain was considered as a favourable presage of the general reformation of the entire island ; and it is recorded that the king had the discernment and the candour to declare his opinion, that until all the inhabitants were admitted to the benefit of English law, permanent tranquillity could never be effected in Ireland. Surry was ordered by Henry to confer the honour of knighthood on the well affected chieftains of the north. A collar of gold was presented to O'Nial, and a royal invitation was given to that chieftain to visit the court of the British monarch. Had Earl Surry been permitted to examine into the administration of Ireland, the equity and moderation of his government, and the firmness of his determinations, might have prevented the recurrence of those factions and divisions which disgraced and impoverished the country ; but, as Mr Leland truly remarks, it was the unhappiness of Ireland, that an English governor, who had abilities to pursue any deliberate scheme of reformation, was generally so necessary to the more urgent interests of the crown, that he could not long be spared to this service ; or so ill supported and supplied from England, that he could not continue it with honour and with advantage.

Surry, after two years of a wise and equitable administration of Ireland, was summoned by his sovereign to the command of the British army against France. He was succeeded by Owen, Earl of Richmond, the inveterate enemy of Kildare. The weak-

ness of this governor gave encouragement to the turbulent and rebellious chieftains of Ireland to renew their contests ; and perhaps the divisions among the Irish protected the colony against the imbecility of its governor. Mr Leland relates an anecdote which illustrates the fancied or real importance of those dynasties into which Ireland was then partitioned, and also demonstrates the miserable weakness of the English colony at this period. Mac Gilpatrick, the Irish chieftain of Ossory, had been insulted by the viceroy, Earl of Ormond. In all the dignity of offended majesty, he determined to apply to the king of England for redress. He sent forward his ambassador, who appeared at the chapel door where Henry was going to his devotions ; and advancing with a composed and undismayed gravity of deportment, delivered his commission in these words : “ *Sta pedibus, domine rex ;—dominus meus Gillapatricius, me misit ad te, et jussit dicere, quod si non vis castigare Petrum Rufum, ipse faciet bellum contra te.*” What satisfaction Henry gave to the Irish chieftain, Mac Gilpatrick, or whether any, is not known ; but the anecdote is illustrative of the manners of the times, as well as the high opinion the Irish prince entertained of his royal dignity.

The history of Ireland, at this period, is little more than a history of the struggles of the principal chieftains for ascendancy over each other—the unfortunate inhabitants being the perpetual victims of ambition, of cruelty, or of caprice. In 1528, Sir William Skeffington was created viceroy ; and in a short time, we find this English knight undermined

in the royal favour by the representations of Kildare, and the latter appointed deputy. The death of Cardinal Wolsey confirmed the power of Kildare ; he ceased to be content with the humble and secondary honours of viceroy ; he affected the rude grandeur of a king, and was surrounded by those lords of the old Irish race, who had ever been most hostile to the English power ; he married two of his daughters to O'Connor of Offaly, and O'Carroll, two powerful chieftains. Kildare treated those laws of the pale with scorn which forbade such connections. The extension of his own power was his chief object, and this violent and zealous partizan monopolized all the honours and emoluments of the state.

Those Englishmen of rank and information, who had extensive settlements in Ireland, began to apprehend that the result of the violent dictatorial measures of Kildare would be, perhaps, the destruction of their properties, because they might lead to a complete overthrow of the English power in Ireland. They trembled for the precarious state of the connection ; and they communicated their apprehensions, and called upon Henry to interpose with all his power, to prevent the ruin which the councils of Kildare must bring on his Irish dominions. They represented to the English sovereign the confined extent of the English laws and manners, language and habits,—they stated, that they were limited to the narrow circle of 20 miles,—they described, in strong and glowing terms, the exactions and oppressions which they suffered, the

enormous jurisdictions of the English lords, the destructive mutability of their government; and, lastly, they supplicated their monarch, that he would be graciously pleased to entrust the charge of his Irish government to some loyal subject sent from his realm of England, whose sole object should be the honour and interest of the crown, unconnected with the Irish factions, and uninfluenced by partial favour or affection.

Kildare was summoned to appear before his sovereign, in consequence of these representations; and, notwithstanding the various artifices adopted by Kildare to excuse his obedience to the royal will, he was obliged to resign his government into the hands of his son Thomas, a youth of 22 years, and repair to England. The difficulties of intercourse between London and Dublin, at this period (1534) were so great, that no accurate intelligence was for a length of time obtained, relative to the fate of the Earl of Kildare, after his interview with Henry. Reports were circulated that he had been thrown into prison and poisoned. So dexterous were the enemies of the house of Kildare, that young Lord Thomas, the viceroy, was confirmed in the persuasion that his father was put to death. He consulted with his Irish associates, and thoughtlessly plunged into a desperate rebellion. Attended by a body of 160 followers, he entered the city of Dublin, rushed into the council, then assembled in Mary's Abbey, and resigning the sword of state, declared he was determined to rely upon his own arms, and the assistance of his brave companions. Cromer, the

primate and chancellor, remonstrated with this rash and violent youth, but he remonstrated in vain. The silken lord, as the Irish bards styled him, rushed forth at the head of his Irish train. The Irish septs joined him, and traversed the pale, exacting an oath of fidelity from the inhabitants. Emissaries were dispatched by Lord Thomas to the pope, and to the Emperor Charles, soliciting succours in support of his rebellion. Lord Thomas laid waste the fertile fields of Fingal, and threatened Dublin with fire and sword. He proposed to his rivals the Butlers, that all past animosities and complaints should be buried in oblivion; that the independence of their commerce should be preferred, and, if possible, asserted; and that Ireland should be divided between the Geraldines and the Butlers. The proposal was insolently rejected; and the devastation of Ossory, the territory of the Butlers, immediately followed. Dublin was besieged by the rebel chieftain; and, had it not been for the seasonable supplies of soldiers and money from England, must have fallen into the hands of Lord Thomas. Lord Thomas retreated into Connaught, to practise with the Irish chieftains; and, if possible, to procure a force which might enable him to meet the governor with his new and increased force. After many desperate contests with the king's troops, the young and imprudent Lord Thomas was abandoned by his followers, and left to repent the wild and precipitate scheme in which he involved so many of his innocent and brave countrymen. He was sent into England a prisoner,

and was there sacrificed to the vengeance of the enraged Henry. Before he fell a victim to his folly, he learned that his father, for whose supposed death he first engaged in rebellion, was still living. Henry was not satisfied with the single life of Lord Thomas. In the insatiable fury of his rage, this sanguinary and infamous monster smuggled over to England the five uncles of Lord Thomas, who, though innocent of the crime with which they were charged, were sacrificed to the vengeance of a relentless despot. Such was the disastrous fate of a young nobleman, who is described by the historian as possessing a captivating person, manners the most popular and interesting, and a courage which no danger nor no difficulty could appal. The noblest feelings of our nature first impelled this young lord to draw his sword against the laws of his country; and the martial ambition with which he was fired by the praises and sycophancy of his followers, robbed him of that prudence and sound discretion which would have rendered him an ornament to his country.

We have now arrived at that period of Irish history which gave birth to new sources of calamity, and new causes of national distraction and suffering. A new era opens upon us; and the accumulated opinions of ages, fenced round by the terrors of power, and the fears of prejudice, are assailed by the bold and intrepid hand of innovation. We shall behold that king of England, who obtained from the pope the high and flattering title of defender of the faith, severing his kingdom from the church of

Rome,—sacrificing his religion to his passions,—opening the flood-gates of error, and letting in an inundation of opinions as mutable as they were wild, and fleeting as they were uncertain. We behold the human mind broke loose, and sent adrift upon the wide and tempestuous ocean of speculation,—the abuses which disfigured the religion of Rome (and what system of 1500 years standing would not be corrupted by human passions?) magnified into abominations,—the power of the pope, which the civilized world had been accustomed to revere, denominated despotism,—and to rebel against that religion which had so often sheathed the sword of revolution, and illuminated the darkness of barbarism, was now considered the best evidence of liberal and enlightened minds, and the best service which the learned could render their country. Mr Taaffe, speaking of the Reformation, has the following just observations: “ English historians, as well as their Irish partizans, give such accounts of this Reformation begun by Henry VIII. as favour their own party, and for want of knowing the real, attributed to imaginary causes, its tardy and small progress in Ireland. That arbitrary and cruel tyrant never meant any alteration in the creed or ritual he had learned, but solely thirsted for money and pleasure. To indulge his capricious lusts he created the schism; to acquire money, and also to deprive the pope of partizans, he suppressed monasteries, and seized their estates and moveables. He had too much need of partizans, to lock up his vast plunder of ecclesiastical property in his own

coffers. He prudently distributed a great portion of it among men of rank and talent, whom he thus interested to espouse his innovations; adding withal, such titles of honour and distinction as generally captivate human vanity. With these means, and the exercise of unlimited power, the authority of an obsequious parliament, the concurrence of a corrupt prelacy, and the general timidity and procrastinating policy of English catholics, the schism was completed in England—in Ireland it met greater opposition.” Why in Ireland the Reformation should meet with greater opposition than in England may be accounted for, without having recourse to the odious and humiliating causes stated by Mr Leland, and other advocates of the reformed religion.

The people of Ireland were more interested in the preservation of their religion and the protection of their priesthood than the people of England, because there were a fewer number of abuses to be complained of; fewer examples of hypocrisy and fraud to be found in Ireland than in England. In the former, the minister of religion was never detected making the sacred functions of his office the instruments of his ambition or his aggrandizement. Here he did not feed on public credulity, nor amass treasure at the expence of the public reason. Here the altar was not bartered for the favour of the court, or the smiles of corruption. The Irish clergy exercised hospitality, the native virtue of their country; their abbeys were seats of literature and humanity. To clothe the naked, to feed

the hungry, to relieve the sick, were their characteristic duties. The superior chastity of the Irish clergy (attested by foreign writers) above those of surrounding nations, was an insuperable barrier to the principles of the rapacious and lascivious reformer. The Irish abhorred the plundering and schismatic schemes of the rapacious Henry VIII. because they foresaw the decline of Christianity, in the abolition of that unity and universality which is the grand principle of the catholic church, and the certain preservative of the Christian doctrine. They foresaw that the church of England, torn from the main body of the faithful, would, like a branch torn from a tree, wither and produce insects ; and that a schismatical limb of the catholic church, severed from the communion of the faithful, would decay, and be overrun with innumerable heresies. They foresaw that reform, effected by the vilest and most infamous instruments, by substituting reason for authority, sapped the foundation of revealed religion, and let loose the most destructive and desolating passions of the human heart. The Irish, therefore, holding firmly by the anchor of their old and venerated faith, buffeted the storms of reformation, and to this hour exhibit a nation professing sober and rational religion ; while the neighbouring country (England) is distracted with conflicting sectaries, like the waves of the ocean, each burying the other in eternal oblivion.

Three hundred years have now elapsed since this great and extraordinary revolution of the human mind took place ; and those who have the volume

of history before them, can best discover the advantages or the evils which have flowed to mankind from the destruction of that unity and universality of religious doctrine which preserved the peace of nations for so many centuries. In 1536, Henry VIII. summoned a convocation in England, to deliberate on the necessity of making a new translation of the scriptures. Tindal had formerly given to the world a translation, which the clergy complained of as very inaccurate and unfaithful. It was therefore proposed, in the convocation summoned by Henry, that a new translation be made, which could not be liable to any objection. The arguments made use of, at this period, in defence of the principles and views of the reformers, and of the consequences of the reformation of the human mind, as well as the arguments made use of by the advocates of the old religion, in opposition to the innovation recommended by the reformers, are worthy of the serious and deliberate consideration of every man, who, seduced by the specious sentiment of liberal and enlightened toleration, encourages the principle of leaving to each individual the formation of his own religious tenets, or the profession of his own religious doctrines.

The arguments of the reformers of 1536 have been the prolific source of the innumerable sects which now cover the face of England: which have divided, and subdivided, and distracted the protestant congregations, and have at length exposed the divine religion of Christ to the scoffs, and sneers, and sarcasms of the deist and the atheist. Mr

Hume has preserved those arguments for and against the reformers; he has weighed them in the philosophic balance; and we will now leave it to our reader to determine on which side truth, justice, and common sense lie, and whether the principles of Leo X. or of Henry VIII. are at this day most deserving the respect and the deference of mankind. We will give the argument in Mr Hume's words; they are prophetic of the consequences which mankind has experienced, and conclusive against those latitudinarian doctrines which block-heads affect, because some philosophers are found among their supporters. In 1536, the friends of the reformation asserted that "nothing could be more absurd than to conceal in an unknown tongue the word itself of God, and thus to counteract the will of heaven, which, for the purpose of universal salvation, had published that salutary doctrine to all nations: that if this practice was not very absurd, the artifice was at least barefaced, and shewed a consciousness, that the glosses and traditions of the clergy stood in direct opposition to the original text, dictated by supreme intelligence: that it was now necessary for the people, so long abused by interested pretensions, to see with their own eyes, and to examine whether the claims of ecclesiastics were founded on that charter, which was on all hands acknowledged to be derived from heaven; and that as a spirit of research and curiosity was happily revived, and men were now obliged to make a choice among the pretensions of different sects, the proper materials for decision, and, above

all, the holy scriptures, should be set before them ; and the revealed will of God, which the change of language had somewhat obscured, be again, by their means, revealed to mankind." Such was the language of the first English reformers, flattering to the pride, and grateful to the vanity of the human mind.

Let us now turn to the reasons which were given by the advocates of the old religion, and the enemies of innovation. The favourers of the ancient religion maintained, that " the pretence of making the people see with their own eyes, was a mere cheat, and was itself a very barefaced artifice, by which the new preachers hoped to obtain the guidance of them, and to seduce them from those pastors, whom the laws, whom ancient establishments, whom heaven itself had appointed for their spiritual direction : that the people were, by their ignorance, their stupidity, their necessary avocations, totally unqualified to choose their own principles ; and that it was a mockery to set materials before them, of which they could not possibly make any proper use : that even in the affairs of common life, and the temporal concerns which lay more within the compass of human reason, the laws had, in a great measure, deprived them of the right of private judgment, and had, happily for their own and the public interest, regulated their conduct and behaviour : that theological questions were placed far beyond the sphere of vulgar comprehension ; and that ecclesiastics themselves, though assisted by all the advantages of education, erudition, and an assiduous study of the science, could

not be fully assured of a just decision, except by the promise made them in scripture, that God would be ever present with his church, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against her : that the gross errors adopted by the wisest heathens, proved how unfit men were to grope their own way, through their profound ignorance ; nor would the scriptures, if trusted to their own judgment, be able to remedy—on the contrary, they would augment those fatal illusions : that sacred writ itself was involved in so much obscurity, was exposed to so many apparent contradictions, that it was the most dangerous weapon which could be entrusted into the hands of the ignorant and giddy multitude ; that the poetical style in which a great part of it was composed, at the same time that it occasioned uncertainty in the sense, by its multiplied tropes and figures, was sufficient to kindle the zeal of fanaticism, and thereby throw civil society into the most furious combustion : that a thousand sects must arise, which would pretend, each of them, to derive its tenets from the scripture ; and would be able, by specious arguments, or even without specious arguments, to deceive silly women and ignorant mechanics into a belief of the most monstrous principles : that, if ever this disorder, dangerous to the magistrate himself, received a remedy, it must be from the tacit acquiescence of the people in some new authority ; and that it was evidently better, without further contest or inquiry, to adhere peaceably to ancient, and therefore the more secure establishments.”

Has not the history of the last three hundred years most unanswerably verified and established the truth and the wisdom of those arguments? Have not the fantastic and whimsical wanderings of the human mind, on the subject of religion, completely demonstrated the good sense of that argument, which says, "how unfit men were to grope their own way through their profound ignorance, and that the scriptures, if construed by the fallible judgment of each individual, would only entangle him in new embarrassment, and involve him in new ignorance?" The experiment of seeing with our own eyes has been tried; and what has been the consequence? A thousand sects have arisen, each more absurd than the other; and the protestant reformed religion, the most rational of all, is broken up into a thousand different forms, which distract the reason and corrupt the hearts of its followers.

That great abuses crept into the old establishment of the catholic church, that great and insulting frauds were practised, that the terrors of the priest were made tributary to his ambition, and that the thunders of the church were often wielded by the hand of earthly corruption and despotism, will be admitted by every candid reader of the papal history; but that the evils flowing from the abuses of the ancient church, were much less destructive to the interests, and the peace, and the harmony of mankind, than the chaos and confusion which flowed from the wild and desolating principles of the reformers, the cool observer of their progress, for

the last three centuries, cannot hesitate to acknowledge. The admirers of the reformation have attributed to its influence, those consequences, which perhaps are most justly attributable to that most powerful instrument of human information and happiness—the discovery of printing. Had the reformation never taken place—had Henry VIII. never existed—had mankind the good fortune to have kept within those bounds, beyond which the ungovernable passions of this fanatical monarch swept himself and his people, the press would have gradually reformed the abuses of fifteen hundred years growth; the public mind would have been enlightened, and public opinion would have peaceably driven into the shade those shameless superstitions, which disgraced the religion of Christ, usurped the liberty of the human mind, and depressed the honest industry of man. But the rage of reformation rushed into the extremity of a pestilential fanaticism, and the enlightened opponents of papal bigotry were burning the faithful adherents of the old religion at the stake, and perpetrating all the excesses of the most ignorant supporters of catholic doctrine.

The reformation produced those scenes of blood with which every page of English history, for almost two centuries, is full. The fanaticism of Mary and Elizabeth, the furious persecuting spirit of the Stuarts, the more desolating hypocrisy of Cromwell, and the sanguinary statute book of Anne, were the fruit of this, the reforming principle, brought into life by the most brutal tyrant that ever disgraced a throne. On the other hand, the reformation alarmed

the minds, roused the apprehensions, and whetted the swords of the followers of the ancient religion. A war was commenced of the new against the old church ; and the world was deluged with blood, distracted with horror, and torn up by all the furies of a desperate fanaticism. Such have been the consequences of the reformation, according to the evidence of history ; yet the great and powerful mind of Mr Hume can see much good flowing to mankind from the triumph of the reformers ; and the same pen which is in one page recording the miseries that his country suffered from this tremendous visitation, in another coolly felicitates mankind on the vast advantages which flowed to the human race, from the murders, and lusts, and rapacity of Henry VIII.

Mr Hume, speaking of the catholic religion, previous to Henry's first efforts at reformation, observes, " The great increase of monasteries, if matters be considered merely in a political light, will appear the radical inconvenience of the catholic religion, and every other disadvantage attending that communion, seems to have an inseparable connection with those religious institutions. Papal usurpations, the tyranny of the inquisition, the multiplication of holidays, all those fetters on liberty and industry, were ultimately derived from the authority and insinuation of monks, whose habitations being established every where, proved so many colonies of superstition and folly." Again he says, " The authority of the popes, like all exorbitant power, was ruined by the excess of its acquisitions, and by

stretching beyond what it was possible for any human principles or prepossessions to sustain. The right of granting indulgences had, in former ages, contributed extremely to enrich the holy see, but being openly abused, they served to excite the first commotions and oppositions in Germany. A way was proposed for checking the exorbitancy of superstition,* and breaking those shackles by which

* Mr Hume might have seen the powerful republic of Venice, rising up in the neighbourhood of the papal tyranny, and displaying a strength and extent of resources, which excited the apprehensions of the most powerful monarchs of Europe. It does not appear that the catholic religion cramped the industry, or that the papal power palsied the arms of the Venetians. Mr Robertson, in his admirable view of the state of Europe in the middle centuries, thus speaks of the power and greatness of the commonwealth of Venice:—"It is not, however, by its military, but by its naval and commercial power, that the importance of the Venetian commonwealth must be estimated. The latter constituted the real force and nerves of the State. The senate encouraged the nobles to trade, and to serve on board the fleet; they became merchants and admirals; they increased the wealth of their country by their industry; they added to its dominions by the valour with which they conducted its naval armaments.—Commerce was an inexhaustible source of opulence to the Venetians. All the nations in Europe depended upon them, not only for the commodities of the east, but for various manufactures, fabricated by them alone, or finished with a dexterity and elegance unknown in these countries. From this extensive commerce the State derived such immense supplies, as concealed those views in its constitution, which I have mentioned; and enabled it to keep on foot such armies as were not only an overmatch for the force which any of its neighbours could bring into the field, but were sufficient to contend for some time with the powerful monarchs beyond the Alps. During its struggles with the princes united against it by the league of Cambray, the republic

all human reason, policy, and industry, had been so long encumbered. The prince, it may be supposed, being head of the religion, as well as of the temporal jurisdiction of the kingdom, though he might sometimes employ the former as an engine of government, had no interest, like the Roman pontiff, in nourishing its excessive growth; and, except when blinded by ignorance or by bigotry, would be sure to retain it within tolerable limits, and prevent its abuses. And, on the whole, there followed from those revolutions very beneficial consequences; though, perhaps, neither foreseen nor intended by the persons who had the chief hand in conducting them."

That mankind have derived any solid or substantial advantages from the wars and massacres, the persecutions and sufferings, which the same able historian gives us a faithful history of, and to which humanity was the victim, from the period of the reformation, in a much greater degree than history can furnish at any former period, of the same duration, will be much doubted by the philanthropist, who estimates human advantages by human happi-

levied sums which, even in the present age, would be deemed considerable; and while the king of France paid exorbitant interest for the money advanced to him, and the emperor, eager to borrow, but destitute of credit, was known by the name of Maximilian the moneyless, the Venetians raised whatever sums they pleased, at the moderate premium of five per cent."

Such is the history of a great republic, in the neighbourhood of that influence which Mr Hume and Mr Robertson charge with withering the energies of mankind, degrading its spirit, and rising on the ruins of human liberty.

ness, and whose heart sickens at the relations of the mutual and recriminating cruelties of the catholic and the protestant, the presbyterian and the churchman, for the last three hundred years. If the human mind has arrived at its present expanded and enlightened epoch, by the instrumentality of the reforming spirit, and by the bold rebellion against the accumulated wisdom and experience of centuries, let it not be forgotten that the human heart has waded through an ocean of affliction; and that the miserable exhibitions of the struggles of intolerance have more than counterbalanced the advantages which the philosopher will deduce from the dignity of mental independence, or emancipation from the chains of credulity. Still does mankind smart under the consequences of the glorious reformation, and still is the human heart visited with all the merciless persecutions of intolerance from that power, which boasts of professing a liberal and enlightened religion.

Ireland stood firm amidst the storm of contending sects, wrapped up in the sanctity of her priesthood, and protected by the ignorance of the preachers of the reformation.* Connected with the most

* Mr Leland says, in his history of this period, that "even within the English pale, (viz. the counties of Dublin, Louth, Meath, and Kildare), the Irish language was become so predominant, that laws were repeatedly enacted to restrain it, but in vain. In those tracts of Irish territory which intersected the English settlements, no other language was at all known; so that here the wretched flock was totally inaccessible to those strangers who were become their pastors."

furious and vindictive power, exposed to all the arts of intrigue, and all the measures of violence, she exhibited the rare and singular spectacle of a nation determined to prefer extermination to a surrender of that faith on which she conceived her everlasting salvation depended. The unwearied tyranny of England for 400 years preceding the reformation, secured the allegiance of Ireland to that principle, which even in a temporal point of view, had often flung its shield over her people. The power of the pope had often stopped the rigour of English domination, and more than once have we seen Rome appealed to, as moderator between the English throne and the Irish peasant. Ireland, therefore, clung to that path which had been her security on earth, and her hope in heaven. Eighteen hundred years have rolled by, and the catholic and Christian doctrine has maintained its purity in Ireland, though assailed by corruption, by ferocious fanaticism, and unwearied bigotry. During that period she has been loyal, though persecuted, and always ready to pour out her blood for that very power which endeavoured to extinguish her : a great and instructive lesson to England, to make no farther experiment on catholic Ireland, but rather to consider whether the truest allegiance is not consistent with her religious doctrines, and the best subjects with her religious principles. It is not the province of a history like the present to enter into any theological discussions ; to make a comparison between the doctrines of this and of that sect ; to prefer the protestant to the catholic religion, or the

catholic religion to the protestant; or the presbyterian religion to either; but it is the duty of the historian, however limited his plan, to point out the *temporal* advantages or disadvantages which have flowed to mankind from the greatest revolution the human mind ever experienced: to ascertain, by a comparison of historical facts, whether the happiness of man has been promoted, or his mind advanced, by the overthrow of those religious principles which held the Christian world together for fifteen hundred years: whether charity to each other, benevolence, and philanthropy, have flowed from the same source which deluged Europe with blood—created divisions among men, that time has not been able to heal, and armed the civil authority of all Christian countries with the remorseless weapons of fanaticism and intolerance.

The illustrious and eloquent Robertson has devoted many pages of his history of Charles V. to demonstrate the glorious and triumphant result to mankind, from the rise and progress of the reformation. This able and enlightened historian, as well as Mr Hume, can see no calamities, no misfortunes, no fatal and disastrous events in the history of the reformation; all is one uninterrupted course of illumination. The fancy of the historian is at a loss to describe the glories which mankind have reaped from the extinction of papal supremacy. The human mind is raised from degradation to a dignified assertion of its right; * and the contentions of Lu-

* Doctor Robertson, in that part of the history of Charles V. where he takes a review of the political constitutions and civil

ther, and Zuinglius, and Calvin, with the established opinions of mankind, are considered by Mr Ro-

governments of Europe, during the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, bears no weak testimony to the illustrious example of political spirit and national independence manifested by the catholic states of Europe, though acknowledging the spiritual supremacy of the pope. Though numberless examples can be found in the volumes of English history to establish the fact, that a faithful adherence to the doctrines of the catholic religion were never incompatible with the most rigid assertion of human right; though it may be recollected, that catholics are the founders of English freedom, and the framers of Magna Charta,—yet, as Mr Robertson maintains the opinion, that the reformation was the great cause of the political, as well as religious liberties of mankind, it would be well to observe his description of the political sentiments, and political institutions of the Spanish nation in the 14th and 15th centuries—a people most zealous in their attachment to the spiritual supremacy of the papal power. Protestant England exhibits no stronger example of public spirit, nor no greater anxiety for circumscribing the power of its sovereigns, or asserting the rights and privileges of the people.

“ In Arragon,” writes Mr Robertson, “ the form of government was monarchical, but the genius and maxims of it were purely republican. The kings, who were long elective, retained only the shadow of power; the real exercise of it was in the cortes, or parliament of the kingdom.” And again, “ It is evident, from a bare enumeration of the privileges of the Arragonese cortes, as well as of the rights belonging to the Justiza, that a very small portion of power remained in the hands of the king. The Arragonese seem to have been solicitous that their monarchs should know and feel this state of impotence to which they were reduced. Even in swearing allegiance to their sovereign, an act which ought naturally to be accompanied with professions of submission and respect, they decreed an oath in such a form as to remind him of his dependence on his subjects. ‘ We,’ said the Justiza, in the name of his high-spirited barons, ‘ who are each of us as good, and who are altogether more powerful than you, promise obedience to your government, if you maintain our rights

bertson as the inspirations of Heaven, and the gigantic efforts of transcendent minds. The miseries which such schisms entailed on mankind are flung into the shade ; and the blood flows from the scaffold, or on the field, without a single expression of regret from the philosophic historian, or a single observation on the fatal and calamitous cause which produced such events. It is curious to observe the tone and the expression in which this celebrated historian speaks of Luther, the chieftain of the reformers. The mild and gentle spirit of Sir Thomas More, who adhered to the religion of his ancestors, is forgotten. The great men who, illustrious for learning, wisdom, and virtue, resisted the rebellious and distracting principles of the reformers, are passed by unnoticed ; and Luther, as if he had monopolized the virtues and the knowledge of the civilized world, is held up by Mr Robertson, as the immediate agent of Heaven, commissioned to burst the fetters imposed by papal superstition on the human mind. Mr Robertson, in his History of the reign of Charles V. thus speaks of the

and liberties ;—if not,—not.' " Can the reader suppose, that the followers of Luther could have asserted in language more strong, or in sentiment more lofty, the dignity and independence of the human mind ? But it would appear from Mr Robertson, that Martin Luther was not only the apostle of salvation to man, but also the first man who had the courage to stand up for the rights of human nature. The catholic religion, no more than the protestant, makes man a slave. In both, great and brilliant examples of the most exalted and dignified nature are to be found—
an Alfred and an Henry VIII., a Mary and a William, have been produced by the same country.

apostle of the reformation.—The reader will observe, that the historian becomes the theologian, and that Mr Robertson discovers all the acrimony of the polemic, though always covered with the mantle of a fascinating eloquence. “Though Luther,” says Mr Robertson, “was a perfect stranger to the maxims of worldly wisdom, and incapable, from the impetuosity of his temper, of observing them, he was led naturally by the method in which he made his discoveries, to carry on his operations in a manner which contributed more to their success, than if any step he took had been prescribed by the most artful policy: at the time when he set himself to oppose Tetzal, he was far from intending that reformation which he afterwards effected, and would have trembled with horror at the thoughts of what at last he gloried in accomplishing. The knowledge of truth was not poured into his mind all at once by any special revelation ;* he acquired

* This observation of a philosophic historian, is peculiarly worthy of the attention of those who have read the life and writings of Martin Luther. That profound knowledge of mankind, and philosophy of conduct, which Mr Robertson attributes to this celebrated polemic, in his contests with the church of Rome, are invisible to all other eyes but those of the historian of Charles V. Mr Leland speaks of the mad licentiousness of Luther, as one of the causes of the resistance of the Irish church to the reception of his doctrine; and Dr Curry, to whose labours the Irish people are so much indebted, makes the following observations, in his valuable review of the civil wars of Ireland:—“The prejudices of which Mr Leland speaks, and which the Irish nation entertained against the reforming principles recommended by the servants of Henry VIII., were originally occasioned by the mad licentiousness which appeared in the conduct and writings of the

it by industry and meditation, and his progress, of consequence, was gradual. The doctrines of popery are so closely connected, that the exposing of one error conducted him naturally to the detection of another ; and all the parts of that artificial fabric were so united together, that the pulling down of one loosened the foundation of the rest, and rendered it more easy to overturn them. In confuting the extravagant tenets concerning indulgencies, he was obliged to inquire into the true cause of our justification and acceptance with God. The knowledge of that discovered to him, by degrees, the inutility of pilgrimages and penances ; the vanity of relying on the intercession of saints ; the impiety of worshipping them ; the abuses of auricular confession, and the imaginary existence of purgatory.

“ The detection of so many errors led him, of

first reformers, particularly those of Martin Luther ; for, (to say nothing of his libidinous practice and doctrine, in marrying a nun, and preaching to his married followers, ‘ *si non vult uxor, veneat ancilla*,”) the manner in which he drew up his last will and testament, on which occasion men are apt to exert their best and most serious thoughts, seem totally void of humility and common sense ; though his panegyrist, Dr Robertson, says, ‘ there is a certain elevation of sentiment in it.’ ‘ I am known,’ says Luther, ‘ in heaven, and on earth, and in hell ; and have authority enough to expect, that credit should be given to my single testimony, without the usual legal forms in such cases, since God has entrusted the gospel of his Son to me, though a damnable sinner, and truth has owned me for its teacher, in contempt of the authority of the pope, and Cæsar, and of the hatred of all the devils in hell. Why, then, it should be sufficient to say, Mr Martin Luther wrote this will, God Almighty’s notary, and the witness of his gospel.’ ”

course, to consider the character of the clergy who taught them, and their exorbitant wealth. The severe injunction of celibacy, together with the intolerable rigour of monastic vows, appeared to him the great sources of their corruption. From thence it was but one step to call in question the divine original of the papal power, which authorized such a system of errors as the unavoidable result of the whole. He disclaimed the infallibility of the pope, the decisions of schoolmen, or any other human authority, and appealed to the word of God as the only standard of theological truth. To this gradual progress Luther owed his success. His hearers were not shocked at first by any proposition too repugnant to their ancient prejudices, or too remote from established opinions. They were insensibly conducted from one doctrine to another; their faith and conviction were equal to keep pace with his discoveries. To the same cause was owing the inattention and indifference with which Leo X. viewed Luther's first proceedings. A direct or violent attack upon the authority of the church would at once have drawn upon Luther the whole weight of its vengeance; but as this was far from his thoughts, as he continued long to profess great respect for the pope, and made repeated offers of submission to his decision, there seemed to be no reason for apprehending that he would prove the author of any desperate revolt; and he was suffered to proceed, step by step, in undermining the constitution of the church, until the remedy

applied at last, came too late to produce any effect."

Such was the plan of operations against the ancient religion of Europe, by the profound and learned Luther; and so dexterous was this great reformer (according to Mr Robertson) in his mode of attacking the old prejudices of mankind, that we cannot refuse him the aid of inspiration, when we contemplate the difficulties he had to conquer, and the enemies he had to contend with. But what has been the real effect of this boasted reformation, this contempt for all human authority—this appeal to the word of God, as the only standard of theological truth? The question will be answered by the hundred sects into which Lutheranism and presbyterianism have branched; the innumerable theological opinions with which England now swarms. The empty churches, and the crowded meeting-houses of various denominations; the inspired tailors, and cobblers, and tinkers, and soldiers, whom we see travelling through the protestant world, bear testimony to the light which the reformation has shed upon the human mind. Mankind, tossed about on the tempestuous ocean of polemical discussion, sink into the grave before their minds are able to find a resting-place; before their understandings are fixed on that belief which tranquilizes the feelings, gives confidence to the heart, and puts to flight all doubt and uncertainty on the subject most important and interesting to man. The reformer, ceasing to be credulous, becomes miserably

sceptical, and perpetually oscillating between hope and fear, passes through life without a pilot, and in the last moments of his existence is still seeking that doctrine most likely to secure his salvation. Such are the effects of the reformation upon a great majority of the protestant minds of Europe at this moment.

It has been the good fortune of Irishmen to have clung with fidelity to the faith of their forefathers. It is their consolation on the bed of affliction, and has often blunted the edge of that relentless prosecution with which ambition, rapacity, and fanaticism, has visited them. A milder spirit of government has succeeded ; and the only remedy for the misfortunes flowing from the conflicts and struggles of different religious prosecutions, is now more generally acted upon in every part of Europe. Toleration, the *radical cure* for the bigotry of sects, seems now to be the principle by which the greatest monarchs regulate their government of mankind. It is the precious secret by which the most acrimonious and unforgiving passions are reconciled, and the silken thread by which mankind are conducted through the labyrinths of superstition and credulity.

The foregoing observations naturally precede the relation of those events which took place on the introduction of the reformed religion, and subsequent to its establishment in Ireland ; and an inquiry into the effects of the latter on the human mind, and the happiness of man, was considered not unnecessary nor uninteresting, in a work which

has for its object the instruction of the people in those principles that are best calculated to secure their comforts and perpetuate their honour. We shall now proceed to relate the various efforts that were made by the first reformers to root out of the Irish heart the ancient religion of the country.

Henry VIII. had made such triumphant progress in his scheme of reformation in England, that he resolved to make the experiment in Ireland. For this purpose, George Browne, provincial of the friars of St Augustine, was appointed to the see of Dublin, and instructed by his sovereign to adopt such plans, in conjunction with the clergy and nobility of the pale, as would be calculated to promote the views of the reformers.

The observations of Mr Leland on the resistance made by Ireland to any attempt at innovation upon the ancient religion, discovers but little of that regard for truth, or of that honourable anxiety to render justice to the Irish who are no more, which should more particularly animate the breast of an Irish historian, and which should be the leading feature of every Irish history that pretends to character or to credit. The reader will observe the following lines ; and, after he has read them, let him turn back the pages of this little history, and ask himself—were the priesthood of Ireland deserving of the censures which the historian of the pale has thought proper to pass on them? Were *they* the tyrants and oppressors? Or rather were they *not* the guardians and protectors of their flocks? And was not the parental feeling which warmed the bosom

of the Irish priesthood, returned with an affectionate and grateful sensibility, by a brave and honest nation? Mr Leland writes otherwise. "Ireland was not a place for these circumstances to operate, which favoured the first reformers in other parts of Europe. A people not connected by one and the same system of polity, and, for the most part, strangers to the refinements and advantages of political union,—harassed by a perpetual succession of petty wars, distracted by mutual jealousy, and the most civilized among them being in continual alarm, and daily called out to repel invasion, could have little leisure for speculation, and little disposition for those inquiries which were pursued with such avidity in countries more composed. The people had severely felt the oppression of the clergy; but what in other countries appeared to be the capital and leading grievance, was but one of those oppressions which the land experienced. When Europe had declared almost unanimously against the yoke of ecclesiastical power, a slight attempt made in one province of Ireland to circumscribe the privilege of the clergy, raised a most violent and insolent clamour among the order, though it amounted to nothing more than empowering the civil magistrate to imprison ecclesiastical debtors." Well might it be asked of Mr Leland, would he think the refusal of the Irish catholic to pay tithes to a protestant hierarchy, such an innovation as should raise an insolent and violent clamour among his protestant brethren? Certainly he would think this a monstrous innovation, and that

the clamours which the clergy would undoubtedly raise against it, would be most sacred and religious. May it not be allowed to the old Irish, to lament the innovation which the rude and savage hand of Henry VIII. struggled to make on their venerated religion ; and may it not be considered a harsh and unworthy expression to use against this people, so grateful to the religion which was their refuge in calamity, that they raised a *violent and insolent clamour* against the introduction of new and strange doctrine, which entangled the learned, plunged the ignorant into darkness, and all into uncertainty ?

No sooner had Browne and his colleagues demanded an acknowledgment of the supremacy of the English king, than Cromer, primate of Armagh, openly and boldly declared against an attempt so impious. He dispatched emissaries to Rome, to represent the danger of the church, and to entreat the interposition of the pontiff in defending the rights and the religion of Ireland, a general sentiment of resistance having pervaded the country. Henry ordered Leonard Grey to summon a parliament, which was accordingly convened in Dublin, on the first day of May 1536. The law of Poynings was for the present suspended by Henry, which made it necessary previously to certify and transmit the bills before their discussion and adoption by parliament. The latter echoed with rigid fidelity, the acts of the English parliament relative to the right of succession—the pronouncing the marriage of Catharine of Arragon with Henry, null and void, and the sentence of dispensation by the Arch-

bishop of Canterbury, good and effectual—they declared the inheritance of the crown to be in Anne Boleyn and her heirs—they declared it treason to oppose this succession, and misprison to slander it. No sooner had those acts passed, than the information of Anne Boleyn's death arrived, and the king's marriage with Lady Jane Seymour. This compliant parliament soon undid all they had done, to sooth their amorous monarch. They passed an act of attainder against the late queen, and all her friends and relations. Both the former marriages were by this act declared null and void; the succession confirmed anew to the heirs of the king by Queen Jane, and in default of such heirs, Henry was empowered to dispose of the inheritance of the crown of England, and lordship of Ireland, by letters patent at will,

Henry was declared, by stat. 20, to be the supreme head of the church of Ireland. All appeals to Rome in spirituals taken away; the supporters of papal supremacy, were made liable to all the penalties of premunire. At length the national indignation at those measures of the legislature was so great, that the animosities of the septs sunk into the general sentiment of resistance to such daring innovation on the religion of the country. Lord Leonard Grey made many efforts to overawe the people, and put in force all the barbarous and excluding acts of former reigns against the Irish. The spirit of Ireland was roused against her oppressors; and O'Nial, the chieftain of the north, led his forces through the territories of Meath, reviewed his troops

at Tarah, and denounced vengeance against the invaders of their religious rights. The battle of Killahoe, on the borders of Meath, was soon after fought, in which the Irish displayed their usual courage ; but, dispirited by the fall of their illustrious leader, they retreated to the main body of the Irish army, which lay at some distance, and which, on hearing the death of O'Nial, broke up into all the old divisions that distinguished the various septs of which they were composed. In this instance, as in others which preceded it, the cause of Ireland was sacrificed to some idle feud, or some contemptible vanity ; and a nation of as brave men as ever drew the sword, were obliged to fly before a compact, united, and rapacious invader. The Lord Leonard Grey, who commanded the colonists in the battle of Killahoe, displayed the highest valour and activity ; and though the victory which he gained, by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances, struck terror into the opponents of his master, yet this distinguished soldier fell a victim to the intrigues of faction, and was rewarded with an ignominious death on the scaffold, by the king whom he had so faithfully served.

The death of Lord Grey gave new courage to the friends of the old religion, and they resolved once more to draw the sword in its defence. Murrough O'Brien, successor to the sovereignty of Thomond, took the command of the Irish army ; but the accursed spirit of jealousy among the rival chieftains prevented that cordial and efficient co-operation before which the English colony should have yielded.

The Irish leaders despaired of success against the arms of England, backed by the divisions of their own people ; and O'Brien agreed to submit to Henry, and acknowledge his supremacy. To give brilliancy to the triumph which Henry gained over his Irish subjects, his ministers artfully proposed to give a king to Ireland. They said that Ireland was degraded by the humble honour of being governed by a lord, the title which the kings of England assumed in their government of Ireland. They therefore recommended the Irish parliament to confer upon Henry, and his heirs, the title of king of Ireland. An act to this effect was passed by parliament, making it high treason to impeach this title, or to oppose the royal authority. It is manifest from the extraordinary change which took place in the minds of the principal chieftains of the Irish, at this period, that the ministers of Henry VIII. felt it necessary to court the Irish mind, with which they seemed afraid to combat ; and that the bribes of titles and honours, places of trust and emolument, were engines with which they now thought it would be more prudent to assail the integrity and fidelity of Irishmen to the independence of their religion and their country. We therefore see peerages and promotions flowing abundantly upon the suspected chieftain, as well as the trusted royalist ; and the monarch shaking hands with the Irishman, whom a less artful minister than Wolsey would have advised him to have hanged. O'Nial from the north, the Earl of Desmond from the south, O'Connor from the west, the O'Rourks, and

the O'Briens, are become objects of royal favour ; and the experiment on the heart and the vanity of Ireland was found more successful in subjugating Irishmen, than the devastation of the sword, or the slower murder of the scaffold. The following list of promotions which now took place, is the best evidence of the new policy that actuated the English cabinet. Edmund Butler was created baron of Dunboyne, Bernard Fitzpatrick, baron of Upper Ossory, Sir Oliver Plunket, baron of Louth, William Bermingham, baron of Carbery, Rawson, late prior of Kilmainham, Viscount Clontarfe, Thomas Eustace, Viscount Baltinglass. Henry did not confine his policy to the mere conferring of title, or honourable distinctions. He professed to place particular confidence in the Irish chieftains he promoted ; ordered them to his court, received them with gracious and royal favour, and sent them back to Ireland intrusted with the royal confidence, and prompt to execute its wishes. Thus Henry and his ministers managed the Irish with dexterity and effect ; and the scene now acted affords an example to his successors, that even from the hands of the most infamous monarch that ever reigned in England, affected kindness and clemency was attended with results which all the power he could wield would not have effected. We find the house of O'Nial degrading itself by the offer of surrendering the ancient customs of his country ; assimilating its habits and its manners to those of England. We find the northern chieftain, unbending as he was to the threats of England, surrendering to the

hypocritical compliments of the English court, and forgetting the fountain from which he flowed. The northern chieftain O'Nial is created a peer of the realm, by the title of Earl of Tyrowen, and his son, Baron of Dungannon, and a priest, are also promoted, and obtain the honour of knighthood from the chaste and spotless hands of Henry, for two reasons, first, because he was chaplain to O'Nial; and, secondly, because he broke the oath of allegiance which he swore to his religion. These are the formidable weapons which find their way through the strongest barrier—break down the proud and haughty spirit of patriotism—and that man is considered a fool who rejects the temptation, and clings to his country. The people sometimes unthinkingly joined in the sneer of corruption; and the honest and pure patriot had no consolation to repose on, but the great and unpurchasable satisfaction of having acted with truth and with integrity. Notwithstanding the arts which the English cabinet successfully practised at this period, on the vanity and the corruption of Ireland, we do not find any alteration in the system of jurisdiction among the people. The principal Irish chieftains agreed to hold of the king by military service; but the inferior chieftains remained in their usual state of dependence on their more powerful neighbours, and the old Irish vassalage and Brehon jurisdiction were still continued. So unwise was the policy which directed the Irish administration of those days, that even the supplications of some of the Irish to be governed by English laws, were either

resisted with effect by the powerful Irish chieftains, or unattended to by an improvident government.

Little advantage was therefore derived to the connection with England by the brilliant display of allegiance among the chief lords of Ireland. Most of the counties that were imperfectly reduced to submission to English polity, went back to their old laws and their old customs. In Munster, Connaught, Leinster, and Ulster, the people returned to an ancient and venerated jurisdiction; and the acts of Parliament that were pompously promulgated by the colony, with the intention of regulating the administration of justice in those countries, were heard with contemptuous silence,* and often resisted by force of arms. Though the measures lately adopted by the ministers of king Henry VIII. did not succeed in extending the power of England in this country, yet some progress was made in the reformation of the ancient religion, and a period of peace and tranquillity was the consequence of their conciliatory and artful counsels. If examples in the history of Ireland were wanting, to establish the good sense of appealing to the honourable feelings of Irishmen, rather than having recourse to the artifices of duplicity and the efforts of violence, the scenes which took place after Henry had distributed the honours of royal confidence among the

* Of this Sir John Davis gives a remarkable instance. "The abbeys and religious houses of Tyrowen, Tyrconnell and Fermanagh," he writes, "though they were dissolved in the thirty-third year of Henry VIII. were never surveyed nor reduced into charge, but were continually possessed by religious persons."

principal Irish chieftains, should be a source of instruction to the succeeding governors of Ireland, and should convince the most stubborn monopolist, that the allegiance of an honourable mind is more to be depended upon than the ferocious provisions of an intolerant penal code, or the galling ascendancy of a privileged class of favoured subjects. Francis I. in vain endeavoured to seduce from their allegiance those Irish chieftains who had been honoured with the royal patronage; and the armies of France had now to contend with Henry's intrepid Irish auxiliaries, who excited universal admiration by the agility of their movements, the fury of their courage, and their unconquerable patience of the hardships and privations of war. Mr Leland is induced to attribute to the influence of terror those effects which the impartial observer must acknowledge to be the natural consequence of a mild and protecting policy. Henry VIII. restored peace to Ireland by the cheap and easy remedy of stars, and garters, and royal honours. Former sovereigns convulsed it by an idle display of power which could not follow up its blow, and a destructive system of policy, which recoiled on its authors. From this reign the reader of Irish history should peruse its pages with more than ordinary attention. The scenes that were acted, as well as the characters which appeared, have a greater bearing on the politics of succeeding times, than those which we have been describing.

The great lights which burst upon Europe in the commencement of the sixteenth century, communi-

cated some of their rays to the Irish mind ; and although the reforming spirit met in Ireland with a resistance unexampled as it is wonderful, when we consider the varied efforts of its propagators, yet Ireland participated in that improvement which flowed to the civilized world from the struggles of the new and the old religion. The universal agitation of the mind, and the perpetual exertion which the understanding was obliged to make in the attack and defence of the most sacred interests of mankind—the art of printing—the improvements in navigation—the discovery of a new world—the bold and intrepid spirit of innovation upon all the venerated systems, religious and political, to which men had been accustomed for centuries—render the history of those times, which we are now about to relate, sources of instruction to the youthful and inexperienced, and of admiration and delight to the philosopher. The latter sees, in the successful progress of the human mind to its present great and enlightened epoch, the certainty of that infinite perfection which extends the limits of human to the verge of divine intelligence, and realizes the prophecies of those superior souls, whose speculations have been considered the dreams of the poet, or the ravings of insanity.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

EDWARD VI.

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A. D. **THE** reign which we have just concluded, 1547. having given existence to such novel and alarming innovations upon the ancient principles and habits of the Irish, it is not matter of any great surprise that the annalists who were zealously devoted to the ancient religion of Ireland, should visit the last moments of Henry VIII. with all the penalties of an apostate, and the terrific omens of future misery. The imagination of the fanatic of all religions deems himself the most favoured of all human beings, and consigns to the vengeance of an insulted deity those unhappy persons who may conscientiously dissent from his opinions. It is extraordinary that the readers of history do not learn, from the numerous examples with which its pages are crowded, of the ludicrous follies that intolerance has been always committing, and the laugh-

able denunciations it has been ever proclaiming, how much more wise and useful, how much more Christian and kind is that principle which leaves every man to the dictates of his own conscience, and to the profession of that form of religion which either education or prejudice may incline him to pursue. Three hundred years of an intolerant warfare have been waged by the innumerable sects of Christianity, almost all guilty of the same enormities—all violating the sacred principles of that religion they affect to advance, under the pretence of vindicating the rights of Heaven, insulting the majesty of its benevolent doctrines, and perverting the spirit of mercy which breathes through its instructions. We therefore see the various contending sects alternately denouncing and damning each other, and the zeal of the sectarian estimated by the violence of his unchristian illiberality, and the fury of his persecution. Modern philosophy has discovered the remedy for this desolating folly; and the mild and parental spirit of toleration protects mankind from the absurd struggles of the polemic, and the sanguinary violence of fanaticism. When Henry VIII. had closed his eventful life, the enemies of the Reformation were industrious in circulating among the credulous the most dreadful fictions which their enraged fancy could conceive. They reported that angels of darkness hovered round his bed during the last moments of his existence, and snatched away his spirit to irredeemable suffering. The more sober contented themselves with the consolation, that Henry, since his schism

and divorce, had not a moment's tranquillity of mind; that his numerous wives were concubines; that the heresies which he detested crept in through the breaches which his passions or his folly had made; that he died unregretted; that he was not even honoured with a sepulchre nor an epitaph by his children; that the latter died without issue, and that the seed of the wicked had perished—thus defeating the hopes and the ambition of the apostate monarch. Such were the consolations of those who deprecated the principles of the reign of Henry VIII.

We have little to record during the reign of his successor interesting to the reader. Sir Anthony St Leger, whose administration of Ireland, in the latter part of Henry's reign, was considered vigorous and efficient, alienated the affections of the principal Irish chieftains by the weight of his exactions, and the excess of those taxes which he levied to recruit the resources of an exhausted exchequer. We find Ormond and his partizans resisting the viceroy; and in the course of the contest which arose between those rival powers, it is lamentable to behold the treachery to which the enemies of Ormond had recourse, in order to gain the ascendant over their formidable rival. It is recorded, that Ormond, with sixteen of his retinue, were poisoned at a feast in Ely-house, and that the instruments of this disgusting treachery were the devoted friends of the English interest.

As the protector of England, Somerset determined to follow up the principles of reformation in

Ireland with all the vigour of which he was master, it was deemed necessary to send into the latter a reinforcement of 600 horse and 4000 foot, which, on their arrival, were soon brought into action, against the Irish headed by O'Moore, chieftain of Leix, and O'Connor of Offally. The celebrated Bellingham, an old and experienced officer, led the English; and after some unsuccessful efforts, O'Connor and O'Moore surrendered to the pledged faith of the English commander, who promised the royal clemency, held out hopes that they would be received into the royal confidence, and perhaps obtain the same dignities as were formerly conferred upon their countrymen who had submitted to Henry. The Irish chieftains had no sooner arrived in England, than they were committed to prison, their lands declared forfeit, and granted to those very men who had so infamously violated their words. O'Moore died in captivity, by treachery or by force. Bellingham reduced the territories of those devoted Irishmen, and thus left on record an example which should ever have destroyed the confidence of Ireland in the honour and integrity of English faith. Two considerable districts were thus added to the English colony; and as England began her operations in Ireland in fraud and violence, she seemed to rely on the same despicable and deceitful means for the extension and security of her power. It may be observed, that such a policy has cost 600 years of national misfortune, and that for nearly this period Ireland has been the grave of English blood and treasure. Until this policy was

changed—until an honest and ingenuous feeling succeeded to the distrustful and jealous spirit ; Ireland never contributed a shilling to the English treasury. Her resources were chained down ; her heart was alienated ; her inhabitants were dreaded and suspected ; consuming English strength, instead of adding to it, and palsyng that arm, which a humane and enlightened system would have nerved. Bellingham received the reward of knighthood for that act, for which he merited the most degrading punishment, and this monstrous violation of public feeling, contributed to prepare the public mind for that resistance to the reformers, which we shall shortly relate.

It is curious to remark, that Mr Leland represents this Bellingham, to whose treachery O'Moore and O'Connor fell victims, as an active and efficient governor of the colony, and laments that Ireland should have been so soon deprived of his protecting genius ; but Mr Leland always writes for England, and the English colony, and if the Irish be extinguished, no matter what means are employed, what sentiment is violated, what heart is broken, or what misery is produced. All such considerations are swallowed up in the grand and paramount one of English ascendancy.—An Irishman should have a different feeling.

Somerset, the protector, about this period (1550) resolved that the liturgy of the church of England, lately established by the legislature, should be introduced into Ireland. For the purpose he appointed Sir Anthony St Leger viceroy, with a

commission to convene a parliament in that kingdom. Mr Leland says, that "In England the dispositions of a great part of the people ran before their rulers in their revolt from popery." In Ireland the sentiment was different; and he writes, that "the factious opposers of administration naturally regarded every new regulation in the affairs of religion, as arbitrary, oppressive, and injurious." He quotes a chancellor's words in a letter to the Duke of Northumberland. "Hard it is," said the chancellor, "that men should know their duties to God and to the king, when they shall not hear teaching or preaching throughout the year. At a time when the mechanic * in England can hear and can convey instruction, and is habituated to religious inquiry, in Ireland we have no preaching, which is our lack, and without which the ignorant can have no knowledge." Were we to estimate the

* "It is a great wonder," says Mr Spenser, who was secretary to Lord Leonard Grey, deputy of Ireland, in the reign of Elizabeth, "to see the odds which is between the zeal of popish priests, and the ministers of the gospel. For they spare not to come out of Spain, from Rome, and from Rheims, by a long toil, and dangerous travelling hither, when they know peril of death awaiteth them, and no reward or riches to be found, only to draw the people to the church of Rome. Whereas, some of our idle ministers having a way for credit and estimation thereby offered, and having livings of the country offered to them, and without peril, will neither for the same, nor for any love of God, or zeal for religion, be drawn from their warm nests, to look out into God's harvest." It was a great omission in the reformers not to have sent over to Ireland some of those famous gospel mechanics, to resist the preaching of such priests as Spenser here describes.

English mechanics of those days by the English mechanics of whom England now boasts, we could not hesitate to say, that they might be good mechanics, but certainly very bad preachers; nor can we see any great injury the religion of Irishmen has sustained by the not having the Irish mechanics preaching their various constructions of the gospel through the land, and setting up their opinions against the old and venerated doctrines of the Irish church. Mr Leland is displeased that Irishmen did not part with their religion as he would part with his coat—change it as the fashion changes, and make it black, or white, or brown, or any other colour, as the whims and caprices of human fancy might please to dictate. We can see no great comfort flowing to mankind from this perpetual change; nor do we discern that the catholic of the present day is at all deficient, or at all inferior to his protestant countryman, in those arts and sciences which distinguish the enlightened of modern times; but Mr Leland goes on, and deplores not only the invincible stubbornness of Ireland in support of its religion, but the ignorance and vicious conduct of those reformers who were commissioned to disseminate the new light among the Irish. Ignorant of the language, strangers to the habits of the Irish, they were unsuccessful opponents to those Irish clergy, whose zeal and whose purity increased with opposition. The reformers translated into the mother tongue the prayers of the reformed church—this was done by royal proclamation; but an Irish priest now rose up, named Dowdal, who boldly and

resolutely opposed the proclamation of the reformers, and the popularity thus gained by the spirited resistance of Dowdal, was not a little increased by the furious and destructive progress of plunder and desolation from the hands of the reformers. Even Mr Leland, who cannot be considered on this subject a bad authority, reprobates the conduct of those officers of the Irish government, who despoiled the churches of all the sacred ornaments they contained, and exposed them to sale without decency or reserve. The Irish annalists, on this occasion, loudly exclaim against the sacrilegious plunder, and describe with feeling and pathetic force, the painful insults offered to the sacred temples.

The power of the people, and the advocates of the old religion, were so formidable, that we find an overture to Dowdal by the viceroy, to confer with the reformed clergy, and to discuss those points of controversy which had divided the people and their governors. It is recorded, that the conference was held;—that the tenets of the catholic religion were ably defended by Dowdal, and that Staples, bishop of Meath, pleaded with ability the cause of the reformers. Upon this occasion, both parties returned with the same conviction with which they entered the place of controversy, and, as it will be seen in all succeeding contests of this nature, the combatants only dispute each other into a more firm adherence to their own opinions. The pride of the polemic always gets the ascendancy of his sincerity; and though he should be convinced, he always prefers sacrificing candour to

the degradation of being vanquished in argument. Dowdal was to be punished for his obstinacy, by depriving the archbishop of Armagh of the high and dignifying title of primate of all Ireland. This title was, for the future, to be conferred on the archbishop of Dublin; a change which wounded the pride and depressed the spirits of the Roman catholic archbishop. His courage forsook him, and, in the apprehension of greater violence from government, he retired to the continent. So determined was the nation to resist the efforts of the reformers, that we are informed John Bale, archbishop of Ossory, was assailed by the people, when preaching the reforming doctrines. Five of his domestics were slain, and he himself narrowly escaped. Mr Leland writes, that " This inveterate adherence to the manners and institutions of former ages, was now become the great obstacle to the Irish viceroy in his attempts to preserve the different inhabitants within the bounds of peace and submission." We have already the seductive arguments made use of by the reformers, in the violation of the altars, the stripping of their temples, and the constant outrages on the old attachments of the people. Is it matter of surprise, therefore, to the philosophic historian, that Irishmen should be so difficult of governing, and that the tranquillity of the colony should be of so short a duration?

The principal opposition experienced at this period (1553), by the English government of the pale, arose from the factious disorders of the great northern family of O'Nial. John, or as he is stiled,

★ Shane O’Nial, a youth of great vigour and intrepidity, and animated with the spirit of his ancestors, once more asserted the ancient dignity and independence of his house. He was joined by the Scotch; invaded the territories of the English colony, and laid waste one of the most fertile districts in the north of Ireland. Various efforts were made by Sir James Crofts, to induce him to obedience; and the flame thus kindled in Tyrowen was not extinguished for a long series of years. The reforming principles bound their opponents together in the strongest bonds of fidelity; and the divisions which have hitherto disgraced the Irish people, seemed to yield to the common concern for the interests of the national religion.

The death of Edward VI. defeated the hopes and expectation of the zealous reformers of the colony; and the interval of reflection thus given to the country on the efforts which had been made to alter their ancient religion, gave new vigour to their ardour for the maintenance of those doctrines and tenets which had been rendered venerable by time, and to which their fathers had adhered with fidelity under all circumstances and changes which their country had experienced.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

MARY I.

A. D. 1553. **THE** reign which we are now about to record, is a great and prominent instance of the miseries which flowed to the human race from the distractions of an unsettled religion, and the wild fanaticism of a varying credulity. Mankind were doomed to be the victims of every passion, and the humble instruments of every theological tyrant. No sooner is one despot wearied with persecuting the catholic into an acknowledgment of his favourite tenets, than a catholic tyrant starts up equally sanguinary, and equally remorseless, to force back the current of public opinion, and if his victim should not be compliant to the dictates of his sacred director, to consign him to the faggot or the scaffold. With the same enthusiastic devotion, we may see Cranmer and Gardiner leading their protestant and catholic victims to the flames. With the same zeal in the cause of God,

have each plunged their hands into the blood of the innocent. What was the cause of this wide wasting desolation? Was it not that reformation, so much the theme of the philosophic historian and the unthinking zealot? But may it not be asked, what is our best protection against the return of the devouring monster of fanaticism? It cannot be too often repeated in this compendium of Irish history, that the sacred principle of toleration is the only extinguisher of the bigot's fire—the power which blunts the edge of his vengeance, snatches the poniard from his hand, and, leaving the mind without opposition, suffers it to evaporate in silent neglect and contemptuous indifference. Had such a principle been known in the 16th century, we should not have to enumerate the religious murders which disgust the reader, and force him almost to abjure his species. We should not have to deplore the miserable spectacle exhibited so often, of those persons whose characters are considered by their countrymen worthy of their highest esteem, so far degraded by the spirit of fanaticism, as to become the insatiable destroyers of every man who chose to think for himself, or who refused to sacrifice his conviction to his fears. We should not have seen the amiable and learned Sir Thomas More, consign a fellow-creature to the scaffold for the crime of differing in a point of theology which no human tribunal is capable of deciding upon. Even in this compendium, it would be injustice to the reader to omit the admirable and enlightened observations of Mr Hume on the effects of toleration. They

are to be found in his reign of Mary ; but as many will peruse this book whose time and occupation may not permit them to refer to the history of England, I shall transcribe the passage, and recommend it to the serious reflection of every man who has at heart the peace and happiness of his fellow-creatures.

“ The practice of persecution,” writes Mr Hume, “ is the scandal of all religion ; and the theological animosity, so fierce and so violent, far from being an argument of men’s conviction in their opposite tenets, is a certain proof that they never reached any serious persuasion with regard to those remote and sublime subjects. Even those who are the most impatient, in other controversies, are mild and moderate in comparison of polemical divines ; and when a man’s knowledge and experience give him a perfect assurance of his own opinion, he regards with contempt, rather than anger, the opposition and mistakes of others. But while men zealously maintain what they neither clearly comprehend, nor entirely believe, they are shaken in their imagined faith by the opposite persuasion, or even doubts of other men, and vent on their antagonists that impatience which is the result of so disagreeable a state of the understanding. They then embrace easily any pretence for representing opponents as impious and profane ; and if they can also find a colour for connecting this violence with the interests of civil government, they can no longer be constrained from giving uncontroled scope to vengeance and resentment. But surely never en-

terprise was more unfortunate than founding persecution upon policy, or endeavouring, for the sake of peace, to settle an entire uniformity of opinion, in questions which, of all others, are least subjected to the extent of human reason. The universal and uncontradicted prevalence of one opinion on religious subjects, can only be owing, at first, to the stupid ignorance and barbarism of the people, who never indulge themselves in any speculation or inquiry; and there is no other expedient for maintaining that uniformity so fondly sought, but by banishing for ever all curiosity and all improvement in science and cultivation. It may not, indeed, appear difficult to check, by a steady severity, the first beginnings of controversy; but besides that this policy exposes, for ever, the people to all the abject terrors of superstition, and the magistrate to the endless encroachments of ecclesiastics, it also renders men so delicate, that they never can endure to hear of opposition, and they will some time pay dearly for that false tranquillity in which they have been so long indulged. As healthful bodies are ruined by too mild a regimen, and are hereby rendered incapable of bearing the unavoidable incidents of human life, a people who never were allowed to imagine that their principles would be contested, fly out into the most outrageous violence, when any sect (and such sects are common,) produces a faction among their clergy, and gives rise to any difference in tenet or opinion. But whatever may be said in favour of suppressing, by persecution, the first beginnings of heresy, no

solid argument can be alleged for extending severity towards multitudes, or endeavouring, by capital punishments, to extirpate an opinion which has diffused itself through men of every rank and station. Besides the extreme barbarity of such an attempt, it proves commonly ineffectual to the purpose intended, and seems only to make men more obstinate in their persuasion, and to increase the number of their proselytes. The melancholy with which the fear of death, torture, and persecution inspires the sectaries, is the proper disposition for fostering religious zeal. The prospect of eternal rewards, when brought near, overpowers the dread of temporal punishment. The glory of martyrdom animates all the more furious zealots, especially the leaders and preachers. Where a violent animosity is excited by oppressions, men pass naturally from hating the persons of their tyrants, to a more violent abhorrence of their doctrines; and the spectators, moved with pity towards the supposed martyrs, are naturally seduced to embrace those principles which can inspire men with a constancy almost supernatural. *Open the door to toleration*—the mutual hatred relaxes among the sectaries; their attachment to their particular religion decays; the common occupations and pleasures succeed to the acrimony of disputation, and the same man, who in other circumstances would have braved flames and tortures, is engaged to change his religion from the smallest prospect of power and advancement, or even from the frivolous hopes of becoming more fashionable in his principles. If

any exception can be admitted to this maxim of toleration, it will be only where a theology altogether new, nowise connected with the ancient religion of the state, is imported from foreign countries, and may easily at one blow, be eradicated, without leaving the seeds of future innovations. But as this instance would involve some apology for the ancient pagan persecutions, or for the extirpation of Christianity in China or Japan, it ought, surely, on account of the detested consequence, to be rather buried in eternal silence and oblivion."

Such are the profound and masterly observations of Mr Hume, on the folly of endeavouring to extinguish the liberty of thought on subjects of which no human tribunal can take cognizance; and the history of the world demonstrates the wisdom of that principle, which Mr Hume recommends as the only cure for the disease of fanaticism, and the only preventative of those evils which flow from the zeal of the bigot of every religious persuasion. The pride of the adherents of the ancient religion, and the innovating frenzy of the professors of the new, were too excessive to allow the mild and healing voice of toleration to be heard amidst their tumultuary conflicts. Mankind took the alarm; when they saw the daring spirit of reformation breaking down those bounds which restrained and directed human passions. The licentiousness of the reformer increased as he went on in his work of innovation, and every effort made to reunite the parties in controversy but added fresh fuel to the flames, and fresh ardour to their enthusiasm.

The reign of Mary was not so productive of calamity to Ireland as to England. The principles of the reformer had not succeeded in making any great progress, and the few who struggled to inculcate the new doctrines were not so steady in their principles, as to refuse yielding to the threats or the remonstrances of the ministers of Mary. In Ireland, therefore, Mary and Philip had few victims to sacrifice to their depraved fanaticism, but we shall find this sanguinary queen following up the political principles of her predecessors in this devoted country, and treachery and murder of the basest kind, are to be the distinguishing marks of that reign which covered England with scaffolds; and shed the blood of thousands to gratify the passions of a remorseless theologian, or, in the cant of the day, to promote the glory and religion of the Almighty.

On the accession of Mary, there was no material alteration of Irish ministers. The celebrated George Dowdal was restored to the dignity and office of primate of all Ireland, and invested with the priory of Atherdee. "A licence," Mr Le-land says, "was granted for the celebration of mass, without penalty or compulsion; and among the royal titles, that of supreme head of the church of Ireland still continued to be inserted in the acts of state."

The family of Kildare were restored to all their ancient honours. The young Lord Gerald, a favourite of the queen, was vested with all estates possessed by his ancestors. Charles Kavanagh, also,

the head of the great Leinster family of Mac Mur-chad, was created a peer of the realm, by the title of Baron Balyan. O'Connor of Offaly was restored to his own county by the mediation of his own daughter with the queen. We find Sir Anthony St Leger, who was the instrument of Edward in the prosecution of his reforming principles, accommodating himself to the doctrines of the queen, and re-appointed in the office of her representative. The return of Dowdal was the unerring signal of Mary's determination to restore the ancient faith. The partizans of the reformation fled from the impending storm; having none of those earthly inducements to martyrdom which presented themselves to their English colleagues. They could neither expect the wonder nor the pity of any number of the Irish people, however patient in suffering, or however inflexible in their principles; and the hope of obtaining the crown of salvation was too distant a prize to animate such men as Bale of Ossory, and Casey of Limerick. "They fled in dismay," says Mr Leland. The general amnesty published by Mary on her accession, made an exception, which sufficiently marks the character of the times, how little sense of justice was entertained by those whose bigotry was to be gratified. Those priests of the colony whom the laws of Henry and Edward allowed to marry, were punished for their violation of the Catholic religion, by the loss of their sees and their livings.

But a transaction now occurred, (1554,) which consigns the memory of Mary's Irish administration

to perpetual infamy. It is not the madness of fanaticism ; it is not the ignorant and ludicrous anxiety for the future welfare of its victim ; it is not a holy zeal for the preservation of a religion which the persecutor of humanity may consider the best. No—the execrable transaction which we have now to record, is the offspring of avarice and tyranny, of an insatiable lust of power, and a desire to possess the property of an innocent and unoffending people.—The inhabitants of Offaly and Leix are doomed to a treacherous and cowardly slaughter. The instruments of the assassin are preferred to the honourable warfare of soldiers, and Englishmen are degraded into the cold-blooded executioners of a generous and hospitable nation. The inhabitants of Leix (or the Queen's county) were almost perpetually at war with the colony of the pale. The latter beheld with greedy eyes the fertile fields of Leix and Offaly, and thirsted for the opportunity of plundering its wealth and its comforts. Its brave inhabitants could not be conquered in the field ; it remained, therefore, to the English colony, to adopt any expedient, however infamous, to get possession of so valuable an acquisition. The laws of God or of man were no restraint on their passions ; the principles of honour, of generosity and hospitality, gave way to the insatiable spirit of rapacity, and the unsuspecting Irish were to be slaughtered in those hours when confidence was at its height,—when the heart overflowed with sensibility,—when the cup of peace and friendship was circulating round the festive board,—when the eye glistened with philan-

thropy, and the cheek glowed with benevolence,—this was the sacred hour selected by the English colony, to extirpate the chieftains and the nobles of Leix and Offaly. The chief men of the two septa, in number four hundred, were invited by the Earl of Sussex, successor to St Leger, as to an amicable conference, to the rathmore of Mullahmast. Thither they came,—all the most eminent in law, war, physic, and divinity, and all the leading men of talents and authority in either sept. “They rode,” says an historian who lived a few years subsequent to this event, “into the fatal rath, (confiding in the olive branch of peace, held out to allure,) in the character of ambassadors,—sacred among all nations, even barbarians and heathens. The cup of friendship was pledged by the ambassadors of the colony; refreshments given with the accustomed hospitality; when the Irish found themselves suddenly surrounded by a triple line of horse and foot, who, on a given signal, fell on the unarmed, defenceless gentlemen, and murdered them all on the spot.

On reading the sad and dismal scenes of Roman and Grecian treachery, the heart is desired by our instructors to pause, and reflect on the enormity of the crime; and the youthful talent is employed in the defence and the impeachment of those characters who were the prominent actors on the barbarous theatre of antiquity. Here is a theme of deep and melancholy reflection to the Irish mind, from which a volume of instruction may be drawn. Here is a transaction which calls forth the tear of sensi-

bility, and in the contemplation of which the honest and indignant heart sinks into a sad and melancholy reverie. Yet the Irish should not forget that the sacred blood thus barbarously shed, was the work of a papist English queen; and they should be taught to remember that the monopoly of the colony, whether in the robes of catholicity or protestantism, was equally savage, equally relentless, and equally insatiable. Leland passes over those disastrous scenes;—Dr Curry places them in the reign of Elizabeth;—but as this massacre seems to have preceded the change of the names of Leix, for the Queen's county, and Offaly for the King's county, (a change which could not have taken place without the destruction of its principal inhabitants by massacre, as at Mullahmast, or by a series of battles, of which we have no account), we have placed this horrid transaction in the reign of Mary. Mr Taaffe, who has accurately examined the old annalists, asserts that this murder took place in the reign of Mary; that the principal fort in Leix was called Maryborough, from the same queen; that the fort in Offaly was called Philipstown, from her husband Philip; and that the English colony passed an act, about the year 1556, confiscating the two counties, and vesting the murderers of the Irish with the property of their victims. Thus were the noble and illustrious families of the O'Moores, the O'Connors, the Dempsies, swept away by the daggers of the assassins; and Mullahmast remains a monument of English treachery which the Irish can never forget, until Eng-

land, by the mildness and protection of her laws, convinces the people that their interest and happiness is her's—their privileges and their liberties, the strength and bulwark of the British empire. The commemorations of ascendancy have often provoked the unbought Irishman to turn his eye back on the sad record which relates the transactions at Mullahmast; and the reflection that such scenes are countenanced by their rulers, tears open the wound which time, and the native forgiveness of the Irish heart, would long since have healed.

In the year 1556, Mary concluded her treaty of marriage with Philip, and received cardinal Pole into England, in the character of legate, for the purpose of reconciling her kingdom to the holy see. The cardinal is represented by all parties, as a mild, moderate, and benevolent minister of religion, who would, if possible, have softened the rancour of the bigot, and endeavoured to procure the ascendancy of his religious tenets rather by persuasion than by violence—by the powers of reason, rather than the terrors of the scaffold. Mr Hume says, in his character of cardinal Pole, “ In a nation where the most furious persecution was carried on, and the most violent religious factions prevailed over justice, even by most of the reformers, has justice been done to his merit.” The benign character of this prelate, his modesty and humanity, made him universally beloved. The lords and commons assembled on the 1st of June, 1556; and the bull from the legate, cardinal Pole, was read in full parliament, congratulating the nation on its return to

the ancient faith of their ancestry. This bull was read aloud by the chancellor on his knees, and received by the whole assembly of lords and commons, in token, says Leland, of reverence and contrition.

The law of this parliament most worthy of notice, is that for the explanation of the law of Poynings.—Thirteen years had elapsed, in which no parliament had been held in Ireland, and the powers of that assembly required an accurate definition with regard to the law of Poynings, by which they were to be hereafter regulated. This parliament, therefore, formally defined the intent and meaning of Poynings' law. It was enacted, that no parliament should be summoned or holden in Ireland, until the chief governor and council should certify to the throne, the causes and considerations, and such acts and ordinances as they judged meet to be enacted; that when these were approved and returned under the great seal of England, a parliament should be summoned for the purpose of passing such acts, and no other. Thus the usage of holding parliaments and enacting laws in Ireland, was finally established, by which all contest and debate on the construction of the act of Henry VIII. or of Poynings, was for the future put an end to. It is consoling to be able to remark, that in this reign we cannot set down the horrible examples of infuriated bigotry that disgrace the page of English history during the same period; that we cannot record the same unrelenting and unpitying religious fury in Ireland which governed

the councils of Mary in England. An Irishman, partial even to his native air, imputes to its influence, as well as to the generous sentiment that distinguished his countrymen for centuries, the mild spirit of toleration which directed the administration of the colony, during the sanguinary reign of Mary ; and triumphantly seizes the opportunity of boasting their superior qualifications in head and heart, compared with those of Englishmen, who were to be seen sacrificing each other to the gloomy demon of fanaticism ; but the progress of the reformation in Ireland was comparatively slow, and the converts from popery were too few to provoke the severity of persecution ; nor can we believe, with Mr Leland, that we are to attribute this great blessing of religious freedom, which every writer of those times, however prejudiced, allows to have existed in Ireland, to the “ stupid composure of ignorance and superstition.” We rather attribute the existence of such a blessing to the fortunate circumstance, that the rage of fanaticism had made no very successful encroachments on the ancient faith of the country, and that the few who opposed were too insignificant to excite the fears or the jealousy of the ascendant religion. It remained for future days to experience the effects of breaking down the venerated principles of antiquity, and disturbing the conscience and belief of those who lived with their neighbours in harmony and peace. “ What a pity,” writes an honest and animated historian, “ that the Irish are not roused from their stupid composure, by running after crazy mounte-

banks,—vending their quackeries of new invented doctrines, with as great an assortment of sample patterns, as there are delirious fancies in the heated brains of bible-mad fanatics ! So, the calm enjoyed by the Protestants in Ireland, when they were few, and the Catholics all-powerful, (the effect of an enlightened philosophy, or great native generosity,) is, according to Leland, the effect of a stupid composure in ignorance and superstition." No ; we should rather conclude, with the writer of these observations, that the native kindness of the Irish heart did not feel any gratification in the bloody triumphs of bigotry, and that the indulgence granted to the propagators of reformation in Ireland, flowed from the influence of that generosity, which has so long and so remarkably characterised the Irish nation. Ware informs us, that several English families fled into Ireland, and there enjoyed their opinions and worship in privacy, without notice or molestation.

During the remainder of this reign, there is little worthy of record—little calculated to instruct the understanding or improve the heart. The battles fought between the houses of Tyrowen and Tyrconnel, display all that fruitless bravery which always distinguished the contending Irish septs ; and the reader of the sanguinary scene must lament the waste of so much precious blood in the odious struggles of civil war. We have passed through so many occurrences of this kind, that we deem it an unprofitable labour to re-echo either the courage or the follies of our countrymen.

THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND.

ELIZABETH.

A. D. 1558. **THE** history of Ireland may be considered the only history in which the mind and heart of the reader are unable to find a resting-place from the miseries and sorrows of his fellow-creatures, in which even a short interval of peace cannot be discovered, or a momentary cessation from human calamity cannot be enjoyed—in which a perpetual succession of afflictions, unrelieved by one gleam of comfort, or by one ray of hope, passes before the eye—wearying and exhausting its sensibility by the reiteration of sorrow. Despair takes possession of the Irish patriot; and all future efforts to rescue his country from the miserable distractions to which Providence seems to have doomed it, strike him to be the dreams of the visionary, rather than the result of reflection, or the sober dictate of cool and dispassionate reason. The

Irishman who is not insensible to the long course of misery experienced by his country, who has sympathized with her sufferings, and has followed her varied fortunes—who has reflected upon the hundred struggles made by the mutual exertions of the prudent, and the violent precipitancy of the enthusiastic, is inclined to close the record of such repeated disappointment, with the humane and benevolent exclamation of regret, that the sword had not, in the infancy of Ireland's connection with England, extirpated the seed of that spirit which has struggled with despotism in vain for a period of seven hundred years, and which only contributed to excite by resistance that persecution which has so long desolated the richest and most beautiful island on the globe. The Irishman, who, from time to time, flattered his country with hope, has done little more than prepare her for the scaffold, and the struggles which promised the fairest prospects, and the most triumphant issue, have hitherto terminated in general disaster—unprofitable to the conqueror, and ruinous to the conquered. That a people, possessing the great and enviable qualities of Irishmen—brave, generous and humane;—that a nation illustrious for its hospitality and kindness, should for centuries be the victims of the most unequalled misfortunes, excite the pity and indignation of every reader. For four hundred years previous to Elizabeth, we have witnessed one unbroken chain of calamity;—we have seen the wealth and resources of our country sacrificed to the rapacity of monopoly, and a small and contemptible band of

settlers gnawing the vitals of a nation who could have extinguished them by the union of its people. During this dreary period, the catholic English colony are to be found plundering the people of Ireland professing the same religion, and worshipping the same God with their persecutors. We see the spirit of robbery generating the same torments against their victims as we shall shortly see adopted by the furious spirit of bigotry; and when the Irish native was nearly stripped of his property, and had almost ceased to be worthy the notice of persecution, we shall find him uncovered, and unsheltered—exposed to the fury of the fanatical reformer, and the sacred liberty of serving the Supreme Being as his conscience dictated, rudely torn from him by the ministers of that British Queen, who gave an asylum to the victims of popish fanaticism, and rescued from the dagger of the assassin the Hugonots of France. It seems that the principle which gave protection to the persecuted of a foreign country dictated the persecution of Irishmen, and that the examples of the sanguinary and ferocious Charles, and the stupid and bigotted Philip, were worthy of imitation, against the devoted people of Ireland. “If the scene,” says Mr Taaffe, “has been hitherto turbulent and sanguinary, it is speedily to be darkened by a louring tempest, pregnant with ruin to the inhabitants. The ancient glory and happiness of the island of sanctity, learning, hospitality and heroism, are to be trampled under foot. In addition to their former misfortunes, a fresh scourge is prepared for Ireland. If popish

England assails their persons and fortunes, protestant England assaults even the sanctuary of conscience. The loss of life and its comforts, God knows, were grievous enough; but the attempt of wresting from them, by tyrannic violence, their belief and hopes of an immortal inheritance, was still reserved to fill the cup of misery brim full, and drive a religious people to utter despair." That the ministers of England could see no safer mode of governing Ireland than by persecution, was not the cause of the cruel war which they waged against the feelings of the Irish nation; the torture in Ireland had the effect of propagating, by its terror, the principles of reformation in England; the pretext of conformity gave an opportunity to the artful Cecil to provide the factious and turbulent and disaffected of his own country, with the forfeited property of conscientious Ireland, not so indifferent to the creed of their ancestors as Englishmen. The Irish offered up their lives and their fortunes on the altar of their religion, and preferred the miseries of poverty to the crime of apostacy. Not so England: no matter from what quarter the wind of their religious doctrine blew; whether from the brutal Henry VIII. the fanatic ministers of Edward VI. or the wretched bigotry of Mary,—they were equally ready to embrace the creed of each, and equally ready to plunder the altar of the Catholic, and burn the bible of the Protestant. The Irish were not so fortunate in the mutability of their belief, and it has pleased Providence, that for adhering to the religion of their fathers, they should be visited with

temporal suffering, inflicted with all the remorseless fury of paganism. Future times will startle when they read the miseries which one sect of christians inflicted on another; and they will repeat those names with indignation, who converted fidelity into crime, and sincere religion into superstitious fanaticism.

We shall find, in the reign which we are about to record, the calamitous effects of that wretched policy which would force a religion upon the people of any nation. Notwithstanding the blood that has been shed, and the tears which have flowed, what have been the fruits of persecution to the reformed religion of Ireland? Where are its numbers, compared with the persecuted Catholic? Is not Catholic Ireland more powerful at this moment than ever she was? and have not the struggles to weaken her but increased her strength, and raised her character and importance in Europe? We may learn from the past, that no religion can be propagated by the violence of the sword, or the statute-book; that persecution covers the human mind with an impenetrable armour; that it multiplies its victims, or impoverishes and destroys itself; and that there is no axiom better established by the page of history, than that to which Pagan persecution gave birth,—*“Sanguis martyrurum est semen religionis.”* The Catholic religion has arisen in Ireland from the ashes of its professors, and now displays to the reason of mankind a sober and settled rule, by which humanity can regulate its future hopes, or its present consistency. The folly of that zeal which would

compel, by privations and political disabilities and indignities, the profession of a particular speculative opinion,* is universally acknowledged; and the civilized world now seem to be anxious for the general establishment of that tolerant principle which is best calculated to procure and perpetuate the peace and harmony of mankind.

On the accession of Elizabeth, the west and north of Ireland were desolated by the aspiring ambition of the two houses of Desmond and O'Nial. The latter claimed the sovereignty of all Ulster, and reassumed the ancient grandeur of his house. O'Nial perceived that a great exertion should be made to save himself from a fate similar to that of the two powerful clans of Offaly and Leix; and he therefore, with becoming spirit, determined to put forth

* The following observations, coming from Lord Clare, the excessive liberality of whose opinions cannot be complained of by the partizans of bigotry, fully demonstrate that the most prejudiced mind cannot refuse assent to the instruction which history gives to mankind. In the year 1800, he thus spoke in the Irish House of Lords. "It seems difficult," said his lordship, "to conceive any more unjust or impolitic act of government, than an attempt to force new modes of religious faith and worship, by severe penalties, upon a rude, superstitious, and unlettered people. Persecution, or attempts to force conscience, will never produce conviction; they are calculated only to make hypocrites and martyrs; and, accordingly, the violence committed by the regency of Edward, and continued by Elizabeth, to force the reformed religion on Ireland, had no other effect than to foment a general disaffection to the English government; a disaffection so general, as to induce Philip II. of Spain, to attempt partial descents on the southern coasts of this island, preparatory to his meditated attack upon England."

all his strength, consolidate his kingdom, unite the distracted chieftains who were subordinate to him in one common bond of union, and boldly assert his independence against the violence and fraud of his English enemies. He reduced the O'Reillys of Cavan, and Calvach O'Donnell of Donegall. The colony were alarmed at the rapidity of O'Nial's progress; and their deputy, the Earl of Sussex, led all his forces against the Irish chieftain. Before a blow was struck, an accommodation was agreed to. O'Nial pleaded the justice of his resistance, and a treaty was concluded, in which he was acknowledged dynast of Tyrowen. The treaty being finally arranged, he attended the Lord-Deputy to Dublin, swore allegiance, and promised to repair to the queen, and renew his dutiful submission at the foot of the throne. It is said that he appeared before Elizabeth with all the pomp and magnificence peculiar to his country. He was attended, on the day of audience, by a guard of gallow-glasses, arrayed in the richest habiliments of their country, armed with the battle-axe, their heads bare, their hair flowing on their shoulders, their linen vests dyed with saffron, with long and open sleeves, and surcharged with their short military harness; a spectacle astonishing to the people, who imagined that they beheld the inhabitants of some distant quarter of the globe. Elizabeth received the Irish chieftain with the greatest courtesy, and patiently listened to his defence. The candour and magnanimity of O'Nial's deportment so gained upon the queen, that she dismissed him with assurances

of her favour and protection. O'Nial did not disappoint the hopes of the queen when he returned to his native country. His fidelity to her interests was zealous and sincere. He led his forces against the Hebridean Scots, defeated and drove them from the castles they had occupied on the northern coast. Notwithstanding these strong demonstrations of attachment to the cause of Elizabeth, the deputy still entertained unworthy suspicions of the sincerity of O'Nial, and communicated those suspicions to his royal mistress. The answer of Elizabeth, on this occasion, displays at once her determination and her sagacity. "Be not dismayed," said she; "tell my friends, if he arise, it will turn to their advantage; there will be estates for them who want;—from me he must expect no further favour."

Sir Henry Sydney was now appointed to the vice-regency of Ireland; which, at this period, required all the intelligence and activity which that enterprising Englishman was known to possess. Sir William St Leger was ordered to co-operate with Sir Henry Sydney; and special instructions were given to the privy council of the colony, to devise such measures, in concurrence with the deputy, as were calculated to enforce the queen's authority*, and propagate the reformed religion.

* It has been often observed by the liberal readers of Irish history, that Ireland is distinguished from all other countries, not so much by the magnitude of her misfortunes, and the excess of her sufferings, as she is by the malignant calumnies of the hired traducer, and the abandoned testimony of her prostitute children.

To intimidate the male-contents of Ulster, Arnold, an English officer, was stationed with a strong force in Derry ; and O'Nial, determined to expel

At the moment some of our Irish historians are recording the greatest provocations which human feelings could be goaded by, we find some merciless epithet, some insolent denunciation of the barbarous character of the country which they describe as bleeding from every pore. In the same page which registers the despotic violence with which Elizabeth insulted the conscience of the nation, by prescribing a form of religion that warred with the feelings of Irishmen, and which might be considered the fantastic composition of Elizabeth herself, we see some impudent sneer against that honourable fidelity to the venerated religion of their fathers, which distinguished our countrymen. The pen of the historian is employed in covering with obloquy those sacred names who resisted with their lives, the arrogant dictates of that power, that presumed to pare down the religion of Ireland to the measure of its passions, its ambition, and its avarice. The historians who have hitherto devoted their talents to the investigation of Irish calamity, can see no causes for Ireland's sufferings in the dreadful efforts of that tyranny which endeavoured, if the expression be allowed, to tear out her heart—which trampled on the most sacred right of human nature—the liberty of communicating with God in the form and manner the conscience of the people dictated. The protestant who reads the persecution of his fellow-protestant, whether under Charles of France, who presided over the horrible scenes of St Bartholomew's day, or of Philip of Spain, lays down the book in an agony of distress, and all the manly and honourable feelings of his nature are roused to an instantaneous deprecation of the fanaticism which could so brutalise our nature. Such a feeling, no doubt, is as salutary to our country, as it is full of dignity and honour ; and the historian who most successfully calls forth the vengeance of his reader against such monsters as Charles and Philip, do the greatest service to the cause of true religion and humanity. But how comes it to pass, that amidst the dreadful and fanatical persecutions of our countrymen, amidst the slaughter of the most sacred feelings

from his territories the only obstacle which now presented itself to the completion of his ambitious views. He could no longer hold terms with a go-

of our nature, which covered our country, not a sigh is heard—not a single sentiment of indignation at the hand which inflicted the suffering? No voice of pity whispers consolation to the honourable men who have braved and survived the storm. This would not be prudent for the writer's purposes. This perhaps would wound the sensibility of the ruling powers. It would be opening the wound which their kindness would close for ever; and therefore it is much better, say the grave and judicious, to go on slandering and defaming the memory of those who have fallen in the cause of religious and political freedom; much better to go on denominating those honourable Irishmen who resisted the reformation, barbarous, ignorant, and incapable of improvement. We think differently; and shall, in obedience to truth, set down what we conceive to be the cause of Irish misfortune, and the fruitful source of those disastrous divisions, which have rendered one party odious, another feared, and all weak and impotent. The reformation has been to Ireland, what the invasion of the Spaniard was to South America. It propagated civilization by the sword, and cultivated religion by extirpating the original inhabitants; it commenced in despotism, and has ended in the acknowledged impotency of its efforts. Another and a better policy has succeeded to the fanaticism of the reformer; and Ireland, left to the direction of her own conscience, on questions of religion, promises as much strength to her rulers as she has been hitherto a source of weakness and torment. The measures adopted by the Irish parliament to promote the success of the reformation in Ireland, were well calculated for the object they had in view. The parliament of the pale, at the accession of Elizabeth, was not composed of those malleable materials, that would, without a struggle, surrender the religion of their fathers; we find, however, that such were the threats of despotism, that in a session of a few weeks, the whole ecclesiastical system of the colony was changed. The act of supremacy, the act empowering the viceroy to nominate to sees, for the space of ten years, the act for erecting schools

vernment which would not place the most complete confidence in his professions of loyalty ; and he resolved rather to struggle for his independ-

of reformation, the act enacting, that all persons in office shall take the oath of supremacy, the act making it high treason to defend the ancient religion, either by word or by writing—the punishment death ; the act making the Book of Common Prayer, composed by Elizabeth, the only book of prayer to be read by the clergy of the pale, who, on refusal, were subject to the penalty of confinement for life. These were some of the acts enacted by Elizabeth, for the propagation of her religion ; but it is to be remarked, that she always reserved to herself the power of prescribing other forms and ceremonies, as it might please her majesty. These were the acts which Irishmen resisted with their blood, because they were taught to believe it was more religious, as well as more honourable, to die in defence of religious freedom, than embrace doctrines which they could not believe. For this fidelity, which should have raised Ireland in the estimation of a great statesman, the ministerial hypocrite and the plunderer laid waste her property, and deluged her fields with blood ; and the experience of two centuries was necessary to develope the infatuated weakness of such a policy. Is it to be wondered that the Irish peasant should, after the lapse of such a period of horror, connect the name of protestant with persecutor ? And that the mild and merciful protestants of the present day should sometimes hear the murmurings of those men, whose ancestors have fallen victims in the defence of principles, which none prize more highly than the enlightened and benevolent reformers of the present day. The reflecting mind will admit, that years of kindness can only obliterate the impression which two centuries of persecution has made on the Irish heart ; and that the greatest enemy that Ireland has, will have the candour to acknowledge, that no nation more promptly forgives an injury, nor more gratefully remembers a benefit. It is therefore the duty of the Protestant to respect the man his ancestors would have persecuted ; and it is the duty of the Catholic, wherever that feeling is acted upon, to forget and to forgive the vices and the follies of the ages that are past.

ence, than pass a precarious existence under a power which discredited his character.

The Lord of Desmond had now surrendered to the arms of the queen; his lands were restored to him, to be held by English tenure, and he himself created a lord of parliament by the title of the Earl of Clancarthy. The exclamation of O'Nial on this occasion, does not indicate that savage and debased ferocity, for which he has been distinguished by the pen of Mr Leland. A spirit of determined independence and honest patriotism mark the observations we are about to read. "A precious earl!" said O'Nial to some English commissioners, sent to treat with him. "I keep a lacquey at my table as noble as he; but let him enjoy his honour, it is not worthy of O'Nial! I have indeed made peace with the queen at her desire; but I have not forgotten the royal dignity of my ancestors. Ulster was theirs, and shall be mine; with the sword they won it—with the sword I will maintain it." From this moment we find O'Nial the furious and relentless enemy of England, carrying fire and sword through the entire of the north; burning down the reformed churches; pursuing the propagators of reformation, and calling up the dormant spirit of Irishmen in every corner of the island. O'Nial could only be opposed with effect by a division among the Irish themselves; and this was the policy which the prudent Sydney preferred to the precarious result of the sword. He conciliated the principal chieftains of the north, Calvagh of Tyrconnel, Macguire, the lord of Fermanagh,

and some other chieftains of the north-west ; who from motives of jealousy and envy, basely preferred the humiliation of their brave enemy, O'Nial, to the greater object of weakening the common enemy of their country.

O'Nial, unsupported by foreign or domestic aid, was obliged to yield before superior force. A temporary gleam of hope shone upon his fortunes ; he was invited to join the Scots, now encamped in Clanterboy ; but here O'Nial had to contend with the base and contemptible practices of treachery and cowardice. O'Nial was invited by the Scots in all the confidence of the most generous friendship ; he accepted the invitation, and at the moment the unthinking Irish chieftain was enjoying the feast of hospitality, the soldiers of his infamous host rushed in and butchered the brave Irishman and all his followers. To this act of indelible infamy the Scotch were excited by the artifices of Sydney ; and by such practices have we already seen the power of the colony triumph over the honourable credulity of a brave and generous people.

Mr Leland relates this transaction with his accustomed coldness ; not a single sigh of resentment escapes his lips, and innocence falls unpitied and unrevenged, even by the historian, under the poisoned cup of the coward, or the dagger of the assassin. For this great and magnanimous achievement the murderers received a reward of one thousand drachms from the deputy, who immediately marched into the territories of the intrepid O'Nial.

The contests between Ormond and Desmond

continued to exhaust their respective territories. Their conflicts were sanguinary and destructive to each party, and their petty war ended in the defeat of Desmond, who was made a prisoner. The Ormondians carrying their wounded prisoner in triumph from the field of battle, were assailed by a rebuke from Desmond, which may be considered a singular instance of resolution as well as wit. "Where," said the victors, "Is now the great lord of Desmond!"—"Where," replied the heroic Desmond, "But in his proper place?—*Still upon the necks of the Butlers!*"

A temporary submission on the part of Desmond to the English government took place, but the old feuds broke out again between Ormond and him. The deputy, in conjunction with the former, reduced Desmond, took him prisoner, and sent him to England.—Here Elizabeth's ministers considered it prudent to confine him. Sir Henry Sydney accompanied his prisoner, in order to defend the acts of his government before his royal mistress, and in his absence we find the colony assailed and convulsed by the rival chieftains, Butler, the Geraldines, the O'Moores, and the O'Connors. Sydney, on his return, convened a parliament, to consult them on the most efficacious means of restoring peace to the country. The enemies of the reformation in Ireland were so numerous and so important a body, that it required all the artifices and influence of the Queen's Irish government to assemble such a parliament as would forward the objects for which they were convened. Every effort that corruption

could make was exerted to procure such a house of commons as would be obedient to the nod of the viceroy. Sir Christopher Barnewell charged the House of Commons with being illegally constituted; that numbers were returned for towns not incorporated;—that several sheriffs and magistrates had returned *themselves*;—that numbers of Englishmen had been returned as burgesses for towns which they had never seen nor known, far from being residents as the law directs. Great and warm debates ensued, and the speaker attended the deputy and council to explain the objections urged against the constitution of the House of Commons. The judges were consulted, who declared, that those members returned for towns not incorporated, and magistrates who had returned themselves, were *incapable* of sitting in parliament; but, as to the members not resident within towns for which they were returned, that they were entitled to their seats. This decision of the judges insured the triumph of government; and here do we see a constitutional stand made in the house of parliament, against the measures of a party, opprobriously designated the English faction. Sir Christopher Barnewall headed this popular party. It is curious to observe the popular party in this parliament advocating the continuance of Poyning's law, and reprobating the struggles of the court to suspend its operation. The objection to its suspension is a singular one, and worthy of record. That it was an attempt by the court against the foundation of public security; that its effect would be to deliver up the kingdom

to the mercy of a viceroy and his English ministers, who might then conspire to enact such laws as their ambition or avarice might dictate. So writes Hooker, who was cotemporaneous with those events ; and perhaps the argument, considering the constitution of the commons, was a fair and unanswerable one ; for surely there is no tyranny so rapacious nor so cruel as the tyranny of an aristocracy, which multiplies the sufferings of the subject in proportion to its numbers, and visits on every village and hamlet a more malignant despotism than the most unlimited monarch would dare to exercise. An act of attainder was passed by this parliament against the late John O'Nial ; it declares all Ulster exempt from the authority of O'Nial, and vests his lands for ever in the crown. By another act of this parliament, worthy of notice, the chancellor was empowered to appoint commissioners for viewing all territories not reduced to English counties, and the deputy authorized them, on their certificate, to divide them into shires. The act of presentation for ten years, and for the erection of free schools, was now passed, and the most remorseless efforts made to propagate the reformed creed. Such were the occupations of the ten first years of Elizabeth's government ; and surely no impartial mind who reads the inflexible tyranny with which she and her officers inflicted the penalties of the reforming acts, will be surprised at the scene of distraction and misery through which we are doomed to wade during the succeeding reigns.

The reader of Mr Leland can with difficulty

suppress his indignation, when he finds the historian lamenting the perverse continuance of the Irish in their ancient barbarous habits, as he is pleased to call them, and recording in the very same page, the miserable revolutions which this unhappy people were doomed to suffer. Mr Leland laments that the same vigour which violated the feeling, was not sufficient to extirpate the man; and that the lenient impolicy of one governor frequently revived the spirit of resistance which his predecessor endeavoured to extinguish. Though the strong and decisive measures adopted by Elizabeth to tear up the old religion of Ireland; and substitute her own, were apparently well calculated to promote her object, yet causes still existed to counteract her efforts; and the policy in preserving the conquests she had made over the Irish mind, was not so prudent or so provident as the principle was vigorous, which enabled her to obtain them. "Those causes arose," says Sir John Davis, "from an insatiable avarice to grasp at more territory than she was able to regulate. Elizabeth passed from county to county, without placing those securities, or making those regulations which were only calculated to preserve the system she had introduced. She divided the province of Connaught, in 1570, into six counties—Clare, Galway, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, and Roscommon; but she sent no justices of assize into those counties to administer justice according to the laws of England. She left them to the merciful direction of a governor, armed with civil and military powers; and the people were

permitted to relapse into the same customs, for the extirpation of which so much blood had been shed." Mr Leland has assigned a better reason for the small progress of that civility and good order which an impartial administration of justice must produce in every country. "Those," says Mr Leland, "whom the revival of the English power in Ireland had tempted into the kingdom, came with the most unfavourable prejudices against the old natives, whom they were interested to represent (both of the native and the old English race) as dangerous and disaffected. The natives were provoked at the partiality shown to those insolent adventurers. They were treated like aliens and enemies, as the annalist of Elizabeth observes, and excluded with contemptuous insolence from every office of trust and power. It is therefore natural to find them not always zealously affected to the administration of the Irish government."

Such has been the true cause of Irish disaffection;—the upstart adventurer shouldering the ancient and revered settler,—the offspring of public misfortune rising on the ashes of the ancient proprietor, and perhaps an attorney, or revenue officer, whose names are lost in the obscurity of their origin, encouraged by the English patron to struggle for precedence with the Irish nobleman, who enjoys the confidence and affection of the people. Such creatures are generated in the corrupt principle of division; and even to this hour, though centuries of misfortune and weakness have flowed from it, the meanest and most ignorant followers of English

faction are encouraged to beard the dignity and independence of our country, and audaciously presume to monopolize the confidence of government, the distribution of honour, and the possession of emolument. Such a system could not long exist without producing its natural effects. Sir Henry Sydney, whom we see packing a parliament to carry his projects of reformation, insults Sir Edmund Butler, who, careless of consequences, yields to his resentment, and involves the south in war and desolation. Sir James Fitzmaurice, brother of the Earl of Desmond, with the Earl of Clancarthy, take up arms against the desperate encroachment on their religion and their properties. The Irish annalists of those days describe the ravages of Fitzmaurice's arms in the most excessive colours. He intrigued with Turlough O'Nial, the northern chieftain; he dispatched messengers to Rome and to Spain, soliciting aid against the tyrannical reformers who governed his country. The present distracted state of the colony greatly alarmed Elizabeth. She relied not solely on the power of her arms; she solicited the mediation of the Earl of Ormond with his brother, Sir Edmund Butler, who was prevailed on by the Earl to abandon the cause of Fitzmaurice. Thus, partly by intrigue, partly by force, was the rebellion of Sir Edmund Butler and Fitzmaurice put an end to. Turlough O'Nial seceded from the confederacy, and the north and south were once more restored to tranquillity. Sir John Perrot was appointed governor of Munster. His administration was at once just and vigorous. Hooker says

that his government gave an unusual appearance of peace, industry and civility to the entire province. It is reasonable to suppose that Sir John Perrot deserves the character which English historians record of him, from the single fact, that he held his court of justice in different quarters, heard and redressed grievances, and though he enforced the law with firmness, yet he administered it with mercy.

The justice of an individual had but little effect, balanced against the paramount principle of English policy, "divide and conquer." Ireland was doomed to be the subject on which every state empiric might practise with impunity—the bank on which every creature of despotism might hope to draw, and the hospital in which every incurable Englishman might flatter himself with shelter. The bastard of a secretary, or the mistress of a minister, might look with confidence to Ireland, as the source of their fortune, of their fame, and their dominion. The native Irish were to be plundered, to enrich the profligate and corrupt adventurer, and thousands of our countrymen were doomed to surrender their property and their religion, for the gratification of lust, of avarice, and ambition. The secretary of Elizabeth, Sir Thomas Smith, had a natural son, who was to be provided for: a portion of the north of Ireland and its inhabitants were to be sacrificed to this pure and immaculate Englishman. He was commissioned to take possession of a place called Ardes, in the eastern parts of Ulster; and lands were assigned to his followers, at

the rate of one penny per acre. The Irish, *most unnaturally*, became indignant that their families were to be plundered, their wives and children driven from their homes, and exposed to nakedness and want. The young English bastard was assassinated by those exasperated people; and the fate of thousands of the native Irish was for a time suspended by the desperate catastrophe. The fate of this adventurer was not sufficient to intimidate. Walter Devereux, lately created Earl of Essex, proposes to plant an English colony in Ulster; or in other words, to plunder and desolate the Irish. Elizabeth supplied him with forces, and with money: every horseman is promised a grant of four hundred acres, and every footman two hundred acres, at two pence per acre. Essex is appointed governor of the colony for seven years; and a number of the principal English noblemen join with the earl, mortgage their properties in England, and sail for Ireland, in the hope of gratifying the utmost aspirations of their ambition. They were but the dreams of avarice,—defeat and disappointment pursued their efforts. The Irish were roused, and united against those audacious plunderers. Bryan Macphelan, Hugh O’Nial, Turlough O’Nial, the Lord of Tyrowen, forgot their animosities, and marched against the common enemy. Essex, and his noble associates, fellow plunderers and colonists, retreated with afflicted and broken hearts; and though Essex remained some time in Ireland, after the failure of his attempt on Ulster, he at length fell a victim to his ambition, and sunk into

the grave, unpitied by his countrymen, and hated by the Irish.

At this period (1576) Ireland, almost in every point, north, east, west and south, exhibited one scene of confusion and conflict. The struggles of the reformers with the intrepid fidelity of the people—the zeal of fanaticism, and the insatiable avarice of extended dominion, animated the ministers of Elizabeth. The O'Moores in Leinster, the sons of Clanrickard in Connaught, the friends of Desmond in Munster, and the O'Nials of the north, exhausted the treasury of Elizabeth, and consumed her soldiers in perpetual engagements. The confederacy was a formidable one; and, unless dissolved by intrigue or broken by force, might terminate in the expulsion of Elizabeth from her Irish dominions. The power of the purse, and the seduction of royal blandishment was considered a more potent weapon against the Irish, than the sword or the cannon—and the principal allies of Desmond and O'Nial were soon seduced from that confederacy which threatened the destruction of the connection with England. Sir Henry Sydney was again recalled to the government of Ireland, and for some time after he took into his hands the reins of power, the kingdom enjoyed an interval of peace and tranquillity. A transaction occurred about this period in the south of Ireland, which peculiarly marks the character of her governors, at once discovering the fear and the cruelty of cowards. Under the pretence of introducing English law, the rights of human nature are violated,

the sacred principles of hospitality abused and insulted, and the innocent and unoffending Irishman plundered of his property, his peace, and his happiness. Sir William Drury was appointed governor of Munster by the viceroy, and so great was his anxiety to extend English jurisprudence throughout the south of Ireland, that he determined to treat with contempt the rights of Desmond, who was by patent the chief of that country, and who, on this occasion, pleaded his ancient and acknowledged privilege, as lord of the lands of Kerry. Desmond appealed from Drury to the viceroy, and before his appeal was heard, assurances of warm regard were given by the Irish chief to the English governor. Though Desmond claimed his acknowledged privileges of exemption from the interference of an English authority, yet he professed the sincerest respect for the man whose authority he disputed; and, in the kindness of the most genuine hospitality, hoped that there would be no interruption to that social intercourse which the Irish ever wished to cultivate with the stranger. With those feelings, the Earl of Desmond invited the president to partake of the good cheer his table afforded.—Sir William Drury accepted the invitation, and on the appointed day went to the entertainment of the earl. Desmond, in obedience to the customs of his country, received Drury with all the honours of his house. Seven hundred of Desmond's followers appeared as if meditating some hostile movement; having been summoned to contribute to the amusement of the president, by an

exhibition of the noble sport of hunting, to which the people of England were greatly addicted. Sir William Drury stopped not to reflect, but ordered the soldiers who accompanied him, to anticipate their attack. The Desmondians returned in amazement at the extraordinary movement, and the countess of Desmond laboured to explain the appearance of that body of Desmond's people which created such unnecessary alarms. Though the president might have been easily the victim of his own rashness, we find Desmond and his countess interpose and protect the man who thus had entertained such unworthy suspicions.

The English policy of governing Ireland is now about to develope its fruits to the most sceptical of those who do not consider the most impartial administration of justice as the best or the most secure system, by which the affairs of this country could be regulated. The poverty and embarrassment which followed the struggles of the reformers, with the stubborn fidelity of Ireland, are a good lesson of instruction to those who measure dominion by plunder, and consider the connection between the countries most secure when the energies of the nation are most exhausted—who consult their safety in the extirpation of public spirit, and measure their loyalty to their king by their persecution of the people. The Irish governors of Elizabeth were zealous and indefatigable in their efforts to break down the Irish heart, and extirpate the Irish religion. What was the result? A beggared exchequer and a trembling government: an exhausted

and wearied spirit of persecution on one side, and an eternal spirit of vengeance on the other : perpetual complaints from Elizabeth, that Ireland was a burthen to her empire, the torment of her mind, and the insatiable vortex which swallowed up the fruits of her most rigid economy. Though profuse of the blood and the treasure of her people in her struggles with Ireland, still no progress was making by her generals ; not a convert was added to her religion, nor a guinea to her treasury. Such complaints naturally roused the loyal zeal of Sir Henry Sydney. He determined to make the experiment of the queen's prerogative, and to dispense with the usual forms of obtaining supplies through the representations of the people. He converted the annual contribution or assessment granted by the various districts over which the English authority extended, into a regular and permanent revenue : he dissolved those patents which gave exclusive privileges to certain great lords, and by a mandate of his council, imposed the new tax on the people. This tax, when first imposed, amounted to ten pounds on every plowland. The tax was reduced to five pounds ; but the principle of raising the tax by the mere authority of the viceroy and council, warred with the constitutional feelings of the English settlers, and an appeal to Elizabeth was immediately determined upon. The inhabitants of the pale assembled—deliberated : they intrusted their cause to three agents, of distinguished celebrity, eminent for their knowledge in the laws. The Lords Baltinglass, Dillon,

Howth, Trimblestown, Bellew, Nangle, Plunket, Nugent, signed the remonstrance, for and on behalf of all the subjects of the pale. Sydney was not inactive in poisoning the mind of the queen and her ministers against the petition of her Irish subjects. He misrepresented their motives and characters; and as usual, the cause of Ireland came on to be heard before an English tribunal inflamed with prejudice, and exasperated by exposition. Even Elizabeth, who we cannot suppose much sympathized with the sufferings of Irishmen, could not suppress her classic illustrations of Irish misfortune. She for a moment relaxed the reins of her power, and cast her eyes on the wounds of her people. “Ah! (she exclaimed) how I fear, lest it be objected to us, as it was to Tiberius by Bato, concerning the Dalmatian commotions—*‘You—you it is that are in fault, who have committed your flocks, not to shepherds, but to wolves.’*” Notwithstanding this charitable ejaculation, she preferred her darling prerogative to the comfort of her Irish subjects; and reprimanded her Irish minister, for not having immediately punished the audacious opposers of her will, however sanctioned by right, or justified by the laws of their country. Such severity of denunciation had but little effect on the lords and gentlemen of the pale; and the spirit manifested by the Irish and English at this period is a singular instance of the benefits often flowing to Ireland from the operation of foreign causes. It will be admitted, that had Elizabeth put forth her entire strength against those of her Irish

subjects who resisted her prerogative, she would have been able to crush the spirit of opposition, however determined or however united. It is to be recollected, that the inhabitants of the pale were but a small part of Ireland, and that its menaces against the despotism of Elizabeth were, as compared with the voice of Ireland, the murmurs of a faction and the cries of infancy; but when the pale had the power of throwing into the scale the arms of France or of Spain, their resentment was formidable, and the folly of persevering in measures of irritation obvious to the most superficial. Elizabeth, therefore, yielded to the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, and relaxed in that rigid policy which distinguished her character and conduct against Englishmen.

—The reformation rendered Ireland a perpetual bank of discontent on which foreign powers, anxious to curb the ambition of Elizabeth, could perpetually draw; and the open and avowed exercise of an undoubted prerogative alienated even the hearts of her subjects of the pale, rendering the entire island a mass of destructive inflammability. The ministers of Elizabeth wisely provided against the storm, and preferred yielding to circumstances they could not controul, rather than persevere in an idle contest which might terminate in the dismemberment of the empire. On this occasion Mr Leland's words are remarkable. "The conclusion of this dispute, which so little corresponded with that imperious violence first expressed by the queen, is only to be explained by her apprehensions of fo-

reign enemies, and the intelligence now received from the continent." May it not here be observed, that what was wisdom in Cecil, Elizabeth's minister, cannot be folly in those men, who deem it courage and consistency to persevere in goading to distraction, not the people of the pale, not a faction, but the whole people of Ireland—courted and seduced by an intriguing and powerful enemy, who is vigilant to take advantage of the errors of England, as he is tremendous in the execution of his threats, and faithful in the performance of his promises. Elizabeth yielded to the pale, because Philip of Spain, and Charles of France, threatened to take advantage of the misgovernment of Ireland. The British sovereign of the present day is advised by his ministers to persevere in a system of exclusion and indignity, though the common enemy of England, with tenfold his ancient strength, menaces our shores with those legions who have humbled all the powers of Europe, and raised on their ruins a despotism as colossal as it is unparalleled in the annals of the world. This was not the policy of Elizabeth; she regulated her temper by the circumstances of her empire, and advanced to, and retreated from the exercise of her favourite prerogative, according to the peculiar events which presented themselves to the contemplation of her advisers. Elizabeth had to contend with the ancient religious attachments of Europe. The anathemas of the pope preceded the arms of Philip, and any adventurer, desperate enough to engage in any enterprise calculated to harass the dominions of the

English queen, was supported with all the ardency of religious and political zeal. To embark in such a contest was, in other words, fighting the battles of the Almighty, and the zeal of the sectarian, as well as the ambition of the politician, were prompt in embracing every plan which might weaken and distract the councils of Elizabeth. With those views, Thomas Stukely, whose vanity and falsehood were detected in the reign of Edward VI. was encouraged by Rome to raise a formidable armament for the invasion of Ireland; and James Fitzmaurice, who was driven from his country by Sir John Perrot, succeeded in obtaining from Philip of Spain, and Pope Gregory XIII., such a force and such a sanction, as was only sufficient to plunge Ireland into all the horrors of civil war. Elizabeth lost no time in taking those measures which were best calculated to meet the difficulties with which she was surrounded. With regard to Stukely and his Italian army, he was diverted from his original intention of invading Ireland by the more pressing consideration of accompanying Don Sebastian, the king of Portugal, into Africa, under whose banners he had the honour to terminate a life which might have otherwise visited its native country with all the calamities of war. The force with which Fitzmaurice had the boldness or the folly to invade his native country, was composed of about fourscore Spaniards, and some English and Irish fugitives. With this contemptible band, he landed at a bay called Smerwick, in Kerry. On their arrival, their little army was increased by the followers of Sir

John and James, brothers to the Earl of Desmond.—The earl himself dissembled his real intentions, and made professions of great zeal for the cause of Elizabeth against the invaders. His dissimulation was carried so far, as to alarm their fears and even excite their suspicions; and Fitzmaurice was so irritated by the duplicity of the earl's conduct, that he upbraided Sir John in terms of the most poignant and insulting nature. Sir John retired in vexation, not to revenge the insult offered to his pride, but to endeavour, by an act of base and sanguinary treachery to an innocent and unoffending Englishman, to demonstrate to his foreign friends, and to Fitzmaurice, the sincerity of his zeal for their cause, and his monstrous hostility to the cause of the English.

The relation of acts so infamously treacherous, and so wantonly cruel, though the duty of the historian has often the effect of diminishing our horror of its authors, and too frequently accustom the human mind to read, without proper sentiments of honest emotion, those transactions which so degrade and blacken our species. Every man contemplates the assassin with vindictive indignation—every heart burns for satisfaction, and every eye sheds tears of pity over the grave of that helpless and undefended fellow-creature, who falls under the stroke of a mean and cowardly murderer. We join with Mr Leland in the strongest expressions of his resentment against the base and abandoned treachery which sacrificed the good and amiable Englishman whose story we are now about to relate, and only

lament that the sufferings of the honest Irish peasant, faithful to the creed of his fathers, and to the independence of his country, can never find a sympathetic sigh of commiseration, or condolence for the miseries with which a cruel and relentless policy has visited him. The humble inhabitants of the cabin are covered under its ruins without a single recollection of their sad and dismal fate; and the fields of the native Irish are devastated by the foreign sword of reformation, without exciting in the breast of Mr Leland a particle of that generous pity which he so profusely lavishes on the tomb of the murdered Englishman. This is not liberal, and should not be the spirit of the historian. But to proceed: Henry Davels, a gentleman of Devonshire, had for some time served in Ireland; and by the humanity and correctness of his conduct, endeared himself to all those of the Irish with whom he came in contact. Mr Leland says, and he takes the fact from Hooker, that this gentleman had frequently administered to the wants of Sir John Desmond, who now planned his destruction. Mr Davels was commissioned by the deputy, Sir William Drury, to reconnoitre the strength and position of the invaders, and to communicate to the government of the pale all the information he could collect. He was also commissioned to repair to the Earl of Desmond, whose disaffection was as yet unknown to the deputy, to inform him that he would expect his co-operation against the common enemy. Davels, reposing the most unlimited confidence in the old friendship which sub-

sisted between him and Sir John, entreated him to join him with his own followers, and drive the enemy from their present position. Sir John was deaf to his solicitation, and Davels prepared to return to the deputy with whatever information he was able to collect. On his return, he was obliged to pass through the town of Tralee, to which place Sir John Desmond pursued him. The house in which Davels lay was surrounded at the awful and silent hour of midnight; the porter was bribed, and the assassins immediately obtained admittance. They entered Davel's chamber, with Sir John Desmond at their head. "What, my son," cried Davels, when he cast his eye on Sir John, "What means this brawl?" The cowardly assassin replied to his old defenceless friend with his sword, which he plunged into his breast, while his barbarous followers flew from chamber to chamber, making indiscriminate slaughter of the attendants of Davels. —Mr Leland writes, that this atrocious deed is panegyriized by O'Sullivan; and Hooker says, that Saunders, the clergyman, called it a *sweet sacrifice*. Bigotry, it is true, sometimes steels the heart against every sentiment of our nature; but seldom has it succeeded in so far brutalizing it as to convert the black and detested crime of ingratitude into a virtue worthy of studied eulogium. It is not the nature of an Irishman; and the bigot historian, who triumphs in the sanguinary victory of Sir John Desmond over the helpless and unoffending Davels, little knew the tribunal before which he was about to present the fruits of his historical

labours. Had Davels, in his dispatches, given as much information as could have inevitably insured the defeat of the invaders, as well as the ambitious views of Sir John Desmond—nay more, was the independence of Ireland to be determined by the committal of such an act, Irishmen would rather wear their chains for ever, than be released by the instrumentality of such a hand as Sir John Desmond's. Like the Earl of Desmond, his brother, they would denounce the murderer to posterity, and hold him up as a perpetual object of their country's detestation.

Notwithstanding the efforts made by the invaders to rouse the native Irish, they as yet received but little support, and experienced but little of that great co-operation with which they were flattered by their Irish leaders. Fitzmaurice soon after fell in a rencounter with one of the sons of Sir William de Burgho, whom he endeavoured to seduce from his allegiance. The deputy, Sir William, had now assembled such a force as the pale could at this period (1581) afford, namely, four hundred foot, and two hundred horse, and was joined by those English officers who were acquainted with the country through which they were to march. Even the Earl of Desmond came to the deputy's camp with a well appointed force; but he could not conceal his dissimulation from the discerning judgment of Sir William Drury, who ordered him to be arrested, and, for security of his allegiance, insisted that his son should be given up to him as an hostage. When we consider the very small and insignificant

number of the invading army, we cannot agree with Mr Leland in despising the struggles which were made by the Irish on this occasion, aided by so inconsiderable a force. When Fitzmaurice fell, Sir John Desmond assumed the command; and we find by the authority of English writers, Hooker, Leland, &c. that nine weeks were consumed in an unprofitable struggle to subdue this little invading army, aided by their Irish allies. We also find that Sir John Desmond succeeded in cutting off two hundred of the English troops, by reason of his superior knowledge of the country. We find the deputy petitioning the Queen for a reinforcement of six hundred men; and, at length, conquered by fatigue and want of health, retiring from his command, and falling a victim to the hardships he sustained.—All these circumstances demonstrate what a nation can be made to effect, when impelled by a deep and goading resentment against the intolerant violators of conscience; and how miserably weak is that policy which struggles to mould to its will, and its fantastic despotism, those feelings which no human power should presume to control, and which seem to be defended by Heaven against the insolence of human pride. This infatuated struggle between the tyrant and the freeman has been the source of infinite calamity to the human race. We find Elizabeth cruelly and idly attacking the civil and religious liberties of Ireland; and the same historian, who extols to the skies the revolution of 1688, endeavours to blacken the character of those brave Irish, who fought and died in

one of the most righteous causes that ever engaged human courage, Englishmen drove James from the throne, because they were apprehensive that he meditated the overthrow of their liberties. Irishmen drew their swords against Elizabeth, because they experienced the ruthless dominion of her intolerance, and smarted under the chains of her petty tyrants. James II. was suspected of a design to establish the catholic religion on the ruins of the protestant; but Elizabeth openly and implacably tore up the roots of the catholic religion in Ireland, and menaced a war of extermination against its natives. Was not such a system of government well calculated to multiply the Irish armies? and have we not seen it the fruitful fountain of weakness and mortification to the persecutor, and of misery to the persecuted?

The English army consisted of 900 men. Three hundred infantry, and fifty horse, were quartered at a place called Kilmallock; and Malby, having received information that Sir John Desmond lay a few miles distant from Limerick, marched with 600 men to attack him. The allied army of Spanish and Irish amounted, according to Hooker, to 2000, directed by Spanish officers. The onset of the Irish army was so furious, and the battle so obstinately maintained by them, that victory was for a long time doubtful to which side she would incline. At length the superior discipline of the English army prevailed, and the Irish were pursued with considerable loss. The Earl of Desmond wrote a congratulatory letter to Malby, which that officer was

pleased to consider as a cover to some real designs against the English by Desmond. Indeed the suspicions so perpetually entertained against this earl by the English, would naturally drive him to those acts of disloyalty, which it appears his enemies were panting for. The Earl of Desmond's estates were viewed with the voracious eye of confiscation; and circumspect indeed must his conduct have been, if some act of his life could not be construed by the ingenuity of rapacity into proofs of disaffection and rebellion. Malby asserted that he found on the person of Allen, the priest, who was discovered among the dead on the field of battle, certain papers, which satisfactorily implicated the Earl of Desmond; and upon the evidence of those papers, he conceived himself justified in occupying Rathkeale, a town belonging to that earl. Desmond, provoked by this monstrous act of injustice, attacked the camp of the English in the night. Malby was proceeding to reduce the various castles of the earl, when the intelligence of the deputy's death caused a suspension of hostilities. Sir William Pelham was appointed chief governor, on the decease of Sir William Drury. He proceeded to the south, and there endeavoured, as we are assured by English writers, to prevail on the Earl of Desmond, through the mediation of the Earl O'Nial, to abandon his foreign allies, and give them up to the English government. He was called upon to attend the governor and the council, and to submit to the judgment of her majesty; and also to surrender the castle of Carrick-on-Foyle. The devoted earl an-

swered those peremptory demands by complaints of injuries that he had suffered; upon the redress of which, he promised to establish the peace and tranquillity of the country. The deputy, Sir William Pelham, immediately proclaimed the Irish lord a traitor to the laws of the land. May it not here be asked,—had the Earl of Desmond any grievances to redress, or did he wantonly take up arms against a parental sovereign, whose government was administered in the spirit of mercy and toleration? Even Mr Leland will not deny the existence of that despotism which now goaded Irishmen to madness; which made them prefer the hazards of rebellion to the persecutions of bigotry; which made war and all its calamities preferable to the lingering torments of religious persecution, or the disgraceful alternative of abandoning the religion and principles of their fathers. What was the great crime with which Desmond was charged by the government of the pale? The demand of redress for the unparalleled sufferings of his country. What were the inducements to his enemies to refuse him redress, to reject his remonstrances, and to proclaim him a traitor? The Desmond estates were the most princely and extensive in Ireland; would not these reward the adventuring converts to the new belief? and was not Desmond the very person on whose widely extended property the greedy eye of confiscation would cast its devouring glance? Slight may the pretext be, which will satisfy the conviction of the political plunderer; and strong indeed ought that evidence to be, which would convince

posterity that the Earl of Desmond ought to be handed down as the unprincipled rebel to his sovereign, rather than the bold and honourable defender of the political and religious liberties of his countrymen. The contest was as unequal as the devastation was merciless; the territories of the unfortunate earl were immediately exposed to all the horrors of a licentious soldiery, and the most fruitful fields of Ireland were covered with the ruins of their ancient possessors. Elizabeth seemed to have closed her eyes on the sufferings of the Irish, and nothing short of the extermination of the devoted natives would appease the murderous passions of their persecutors. The castles of the earl, which had surrendered to the honour of their besiegers, were razed to the ground, and their credulous inhabitants devoted to the sword or the gallows. "It would be equally shocking and tedious," writes Dr Curry, "to recite all those well attested acts of cruelty and perfidy, which were perpetrated on those unhappy people, by the order and connivance of her majesty's ministers of Ireland." So writes this humane and laborious inquirer after truth. He then gives that miserable instance which it is our duty to detail, and which alone would be sufficient to palliate the thousand acts of sanguinary vengeance, that the reader of the following pages is doomed to peruse.

Soon after the Earl of Desmond was proclaimed a traitor by the deputy, his territories were desolated by a rapacious soldiery, and every act of barbarous and insatiable outrage practised upon the in-

nocent and unoffending inhabitants. Nature, at length roused by the excess of suffering, made a desperate effort: the Irish attacked the town of Youghall, which they plundered without mercy, and cut off a large detachment which the deputy had commissioned to defend it. This partial success animated the courage and determination of Desmond, and we find him making those artful appeals to the religious and patriotic feelings of his countrymen, that were best calculated to rouse them to a great and universal effort. The sufferings of the Earl of Desmond and his family, in their various struggles for their great possessions, excite the sympathy of every mind that contemplates the ancient power of this persecuted nobleman;* when we find them taking shelter in the woods of the estates of which Desmond was the lawful and honoured master, we cannot refrain from deprecating that infamous principle, which, under the pretext of civilization, desolated the fairest portion of Ireland, and drove to ruin the oldest and most respected of the Irish chieftains. The various castles of Earl Desmond were reduced; and the murder of the Irish in the castle of Carrick-on-Foyle, under the command of the Italian called Julio, after they had surrendered to the British arms, may be taken by the reader as an epitome of the savage

* Desmond (according to Baker's chronicles) possessed whole counties, besides the county palatine of Kerry; and had of his own name and race, at least five hundred gentlemen at his command; all of whom, and his own life also, he lost within the space of three years; very few of the house being left alive.

warfare waged by England against the country. Soon after, the ignorance of a new deputy contributed to raise the almost exhausted spirits of the followers of Desmond. Lord Grey, whose administration was an uninterrupted course of the most insatiable barbarity and plunder, was appointed Lord-deputy; and so ardent was his zeal to distinguish himself as the destroyer of the Irish people, that it plunged him into difficulties discreditable and injurious to his military character. Ignorant of the country, he presumed to lead his troops against the Irish, into the valley of Glendalough, in the county of Wicklow; which, fortified by nature, and defended by enthusiasm, could bid defiance to the most experienced and skilful of the British generals: Lord Grey was surrounded with enemies which he could not reach, and assailed on all sides by attacks which he could not return; he lost his principal officers, and returned to the seat of government, covered with confusion and dishonour. So decided a victory raised the spirits of the Irish, and the arrival of an army of Italians and Spaniards in the south, inspired the followers of Desmond with increased confidence and energy; they landed at a place called Smerwick; they brought arms and ammunition for five thousand men, and a large sum of money which was to be delivered to the Earl of Desmond. The Earl of Ormond was ordered to march against the invaders, and Sir William Winter proceeded to invest the enemy by sea, while Ormond was collecting his forces by land; thus surrounded, the fort of Smerwick was sum-

moned to surrender; the refusal of the Spaniards and their Irish auxiliaries was bold and peremptory: they went on with vigour, and the Spaniards finding it impossible to hold out much longer, agreed to capitulate on certain conditions, honourable to the besieged; Lord Grey, in the confidence of victory disdained to grant any terms to an enemy whom he insultingly denominated traitors; from them no money could be expected; from them no money was received: the garrison was forced to surrender, and after being disarmed, were cruelly butchered, under the direction and immediate authority of Sir Walter Raleigh *. Elizabeth, it is said, expressed the utmost concern and displeasure at the atrocious and barbarous scene: the continent of Europe heard the account of the massacre with horror, and every heart and every hand volunteered in offering their services to avenge such an outrage on humanity. In Ireland the effects of such sanguinary proceedings were to multiply new enemies; and create new insurrections; the spirit of vengeance ran through the country, proclaiming the wantonness of English cruelty, and appealing to all the honourable sympathies of the heart for

* Dr. Curry says, that a Roman catholic writer, who lived near that time, thus relates the affair we have detailed above. "Nine hundred Spaniards, except about eleven officers, were stript of their weapons, and all slain or cast over the cliffs into the sea, (for the fort of Smerwick stood upon a mighty high rock over the sea), notwithstanding the lord deputy's word and faith unto them all for their lives, liberties and goods, and safe conduct into Spain."—*Theatre of Cath. Relig.*

satisfaction, and the punishment of such barbarous delinquency. The seat of government was threatened with a conspiracy, and the principal Irish families which surrounded the metropolis, were suspected of being concerned in the plot against the English Government. Such are the invariable consequences of persecution; it multiplies the evil supposed to be exterminated, and the blood of the victim seems to produce new enemies to the oppressor, and new proselytes to the principle he vainly imagines he is extinguishing. Lord Grey, in the brutality of his fury, was determined to make a great and signal example; he seized several of the most distinguished persons, some of whom he executed. Among these was Nugent, baron of the exchequer, a man, (Mr Leland writes), of a singular good life and reputation; he was sacrificed to the blind and indiscriminate barbarity of the deputy, whom we soon find so detested in his government of Ireland, that even he can no longer bear the eternal indignation with which he is surrounded; he is weary of his station, and petitions for his recal.

In the history of this unfortunate country, the reader will find numerous instances of the most unaccountable passion for the destruction of its unoffending and innocent inhabitants. They will wonder that the miserable unproductiveness of a system, so often experienced, should not have induced the ministers of Elizabeth to try the mild and merciful plan of equal and impartial protection; but we shall find the voracious spirit of confiscation swallowing up all other considerations, and the cold

blooded murderers of the Irish rewarded with the possession of estates and of titles. In Carte's life of Ormond, we read (says Dr Curry) that for the slaughter of the Irish at Limerick, and at other places, Sir Walter Raleigh had forty thousand acres of land bestowed on him, in the county of Cork, which he afterwards sold to Richard, first Earl of Cork. We may form some idea of the misery experienced by our country, during the persecution of the Earl of Desmond, from the following passage, quoted by Dr Curry from Spencer. He was secretary to Lord Grey during his administration of Ireland; and we should conclude, from the pathetic and feeling language of his narrative, was the indignant observer of the wretched scene which he describes. "Notwithstanding that the province of Munster was a most plentiful country, full of corn and cattle, yet ere one year and a half, they were brought to such wretchedness, as that any heart would rue the same; out of every corner of the woods and glens, they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death; they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves: they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them; yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcases they spared not to scrape out of their graves; and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet not able to continue there withal; that in a short space there was none almost left, and a most populous and plentiful country suddenly left

void of man and beast." Such is the description of the desolation and misery depicted on one of the fairest portions of Ireland by the secretary of that chief governor, who was the author of such unparalleled calamity. Mr Leland says, that Lord Grey tyrannized with such merciless barbarity, that it was represented to the queen, "that little was left in Ireland for her majesty to reign over, *but ashes and carcasses.*" At length Lord Grey was recalled, and a pardon offered to those Irish who would accept it.

The war had now nearly terminated; the forces and the spirits of the Earl of Desmond were nearly exhausted: pursued on all sides by the indefatigable vigour of Ormond, he entreated to be received into mercy. His applications were rejected; he fled for refuge to the woods and bogs, and depended on the fidelity of his followers for the support of nature. He was at length discovered in a miserable hut, his head cut off, and carried to the Earl of Ormond: it was immediately conveyed to the queen, and impaled on London bridge.

Dr. Curry writes, that after Desmond's death, and the entire suppression of his rebellion, unheard-of cruelties were committed on the provincials of Munster, by the English commanders. Great companies of those provincials, men, women and children, were often forced into castles and other houses, which were then set on fire; and if any of them attempted to escape from the flames, they were shot or stabbed by the soldiers who guarded them. It was a diversion to these monsters of men

to take up infants on the points of their spears, and whirl them about in their agony, apologizing for their cruelty by saying, "that if they suffered them to live to grow up, *they would become popish rebels.*" Many of the women were found hanging on trees, with their children at their breasts, strangled with the mother's hair. Will any man who reads those atrocities, so much wonder at the horrible vengeance which the Irish took upon their oppressors, when the fortune of war in some years after left the English at the mercy of Ireland? Mr Leland says, that Desmond and about one hundred and forty of his accomplices were attainted, and their estates declared forfeited to the Queen. Those estates were offered to the younger sons of Englishmen at three pence, in some places two pence per acre, and for three years more, half only of the stipulated rent was to be paid. In another place Mr Leland writes, that "none of the *native Irish* were to be admitted among these tenantry." Thus the *extermination* of the Irish was the grand principle of Elizabeth's government in Ireland; and to this infatuated and wicked principle may the reader attribute all the scenes of suffering, and cruelty, and calamity, which the English adventurers in Ireland experienced, and which should be a lesson to future governments never to put in practice that system, which may be visited on themselves with such dreadful vengeance. What Irishman can read the following fact, without yielding to those honest feelings of indignation, by which the hearts of our ancestors must have been inflamed to madness?

“ Upon the attainder of the Earl of Desmond and his confederates,” says Dr Curry, “ not less than 574,623 acres of land, English measure, fell to the crown, and were disposed of by Queen Elizabeth to English undertakers.”

The death of the Earl of Desmond, and the defeat of his confederates, gave an interval of tranquillity to the south of Ireland. That country which, under a protecting government, could have contributed to enrich the royal treasury, and supply its inhabitants with every comfort, presented one unvaried scene of wretchedness and desolation : the solitude of the desert and the tranquillity of the grave;—“ *Cum solitudinem faciant, pacem appellant.*” It might be supposed that the jealousy of the Anglo-Irish rulers would have been buried in the same tomb with its miserable victims ; yet we find Elizabeth’s counsellors determining to continue that system of division and distraction, which had already caused such shedding of human blood, and waste of Irish treasure. After the experience of six hundred years of weakness and poverty, it is incredible to suppose that Irishmen or Englishmen, in the nineteenth century, should be found to echo the sentiments and opinions of some of those selfish and unenlightened counsellors of Elizabeth, who thus spoke to their sovereign :—“ Should we exert ourselves,” said they, “ in reducing Ireland to order and civility, it must soon acquire power, consequence, and riches ; the inhabitants will be thus alienated from England ; they will cast themselves into the arms of some foreign power, or perhaps

erect themselves into an independent and separate state. Let us rather connive at their disorder; for a weak and disordered people never can attempt to detach themselves from the crown of England."* May it not then be asked, have such been the effects of that mild and benignant policy which extended to Ireland the rights and privileges of the British constitution? Have those who accumulated fortunes and obtained honours, under the protecting patronage of a free constitution, exhibited any disposition to destroy the hand which enriched them, or overturn the government which sheltered them? The people and the government of a free country are both equally anxious to defend each other; the wealth and strength of the one are the wealth and strength of the other; but the government which rests its security on the poverty of the people, must trust to the terror of the bayonet, or the cruelty of penal law, for its defence against the disaffection of that people it rules over. The reign we are giving a brief account of, demonstrates this truth in the most glaring colours; its policy was as impoverishing to the royal treasury, as it was cruel and merciless to the Irish people.

* The same miserable policy recommended to Elizabeth, has been zealously acted upon, even within the last fifty years. Men of talents and plausibility have been found among the ranks of the monopolists, who will unblushingly advocate a system, which they are convinced leads to public ruin and convulsion. Lord Clare and Mr Foster, in our own times, have sacrificed the rights and feelings of three-fourths of their countrymen, to the ascendancy of a faction, of which they might be the leaders and demigods. Such is the wretched ambition of some men, whose talents secretly despise the duty their corruption and their vanity prompt them to perform.

Sir John Perrot, an Englishman of whose character historians speak with much admiration, was now, (1584,) appointed deputy ; and it is with pleasure we observe his honourable efforts to heal the wounds inflicted by his predecessor ; he was an advocate for mild and parental measures. Convinced of the superiority of British law, in the dispensation of equal and impartial justice, we find him making every exertion to communicate to the distracted people of the south, those salutary regulations which were calculated to procure peace and tranquillity. The Irish meet their viceroy with corresponding sentiments, regard and confidence, and profess the most dutiful alacrity to acquiescence ; they agree with the regulations of Sir John Perrot, who appoints sheriffs to the counties of Clare, Galway, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Leitrim, and assigns the presidency of the whole province to Sir Richard Bingham. We shall now see great examples of the happy and productive effects of fair and equitable government. When Sir John Perrot was making his usual and salutary arrangement in the south, an account arrives of the landing of one thousand Scotch in Ulster : The deputy returned to Dublin, received the subscriptions of some of the Leinster chieftains, and marched to the north. Mr Leland's reflection is here worthy the attention of every reader : " Here the appearance of a governor, renowned for valour and justice, and noted especially for a humane and equitable attention to the ancient natives, had a sudden and powerful effect. The new arrived Scots fled to their ships,

and left their brethren of Ulster, after some ineffectual resistance, to make their peace with government." Is not this fact a volume to every governor of Ireland, to act towards Ireland with justice and with mercy? "The Irish chieftains crowded to Sir John Perrot," says Mr Leland, "with the most zealous professions of loyalty and submission."—Would the cold and frozen heart of such a man as Lord Gray, whose bravery was that of the assassin, and whose mercy was that of the tyger—would his appearance produce an instantaneous movement of loyal and grateful fidelity at the moment of formidable invasion? The Irish heart, which is not insensible to services, nor forgetful of injuries, will answer the question; but the effects of Sir John Perrot's wisdom do not stop here; he prevails on the Irish to maintain a force of eleven hundred men at their own expence, to be devoted to the service of Elizabeth.* This, no doubt, astonished the men who reposed no confidence in Ireland; but such will ever be the effects of a generous and manly policy. England is now convinced of it, and every year adds new force to its truth, and new inducements to its adoption. The honourable and useful course which this wise and excellent man was pursuing, was doomed to be interrupted by those little intriguing reptiles, which sometimes undermine the most sound and generous understand-

* The Irish chieftains agreed to maintain eleven hundred men for the queen, at their own charge, provided they were allowed the free exercise of their religion, and be liberated from the ravages and oppressions of the sheriffs.

dings, and by misrepresentation and falsehood succeed in perverting every act, discolouring every motive, and making the virtues which they hate the instruments of ruin to their amiable and enlightened possessors.

“Sir John Perrot,” says Mr Leland, “ever professed a tender regard for the rights of the old native Irish ;* a principle equally honourable and politic, and which naturally made him attentive to guard against oppression and abuses in the lower offices of administration ; and this could scarcely fail of raising a number of secret enemies.

Loftus, the archbishop of Dublin, in consequence of a plan suggested by Sir John Perrot, to erect a university in Ireland militating against his personal

* The results of Sir John Perrot's administration incontrovertibly prove, if proof were wanting to elucidate a self-evident proposition, “that such a national emancipation could have been effected;—uniting the two races, English and Irish, into one people; obeying one government, agreeably to one constitution and system of laws, without fighting a blow; but it would not suit the inhuman policy of those who wished to keep the Irish divided and poor, to ensure their obedience, nor of those blood-thirsty vultures, who sought the confiscation of a kingdom, by exterminating a nation always renowned for hospitality, generosity, sanctity, and learning; the eminent benefactress of England and Europe; nor the queen, whose unquenchable fury against the catholic faith, required the extirpation thereof out of the land. What if the Milesians were exterminated by war, perished by famine, by murderous banquets and negotiations, sham plots? Elizabeth could colonize the land, and thus get rid of the superabundant population of Ireland.” The above reflection came from the pen of Mr Taaffe, whose integrity and warm feelings for his country's sufferings render his history truly valuable to Irishmen.

interest, made every possible effort to misrepresent the deputy to Elizabeth. The friend of the Irish people was immediately assailed by all the satellites which circulate round corruption and rapacity ; the queen was surrounded with a crowd of whisperers against the character of Sir John Perrot ; and the services of a wise and faithful servant were obliterated from the royal mind by the ceaseless importunities of a despicable faction. So certain was Perrot that he could successfully confute his accusers, that he petitioned Elizabeth to suffer him to appear before her, to justify his conduct, and to confound his enemies. A Spanish invasion being at the time apprehended, Sir John Perrot proposed to Elizabeth, as the best evidence of the regard in which he was held in Ireland, and of the influence which he enjoyed, that he would bring with him to her majesty a number of Irish chieftains of the several provinces, on whom the common enemy relied for the success of their enterprise,—and that those very chieftains would be hostages to her majesty for the fidelity of her Irish people. The applications of Sir John Perrot do not appear to have been attended to ; for the present, however, he was not disturbed in his government. The Irish parliament proceeded to attaint the Earl of Desmond and his adherents ; and the favourite plan of re-peopling Munster with English adventurers, began to be acted upon with vigour. Those English officers who distinguished themselves in the persecution of the Irish people, received grants of large portions of Irish territory. Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Christo-

pher Hatton, Sir Thomas Morris, Sir Warham St Leger, received exclusive donations ; it is easy to conceive the miserable state of the poor devoted inhabitants, who still occupied those lands, whom the sword had spared for the cold relentless cruelty of those unjust task-masters that were doomed to be their landlords. Such persons as these we have named, entrusted the settlement of their estates to agents, *middle men*, ignorant, voracious and corrupt. They became powerful sources of that heart-burning vexation that found relief only in those moments of public convulsion, which frequently exposed to hazard the connexion between England and Ireland. Had the same spirit of kindness and mercy which governed the bosom of Sir John Perrot, characterized those English governors who were sent into the different provinces, much advantage would have flowed from the communication of British laws and British customs ; but the wanton tyranny of Sir Richard Bingham disgusted them with every thing English in the province of Connaught. The sheriffs, and other officers of justice, emulated the example of the president : and the whole province presented a scene of suffering on the side of the people, and the most goading tyranny on the part of their governors. Sir John Perrot listened with respect to the complaints of the people, and summoned the president to the seat of government : the Scotch invade the province, and Sir John Perrot is obliged to take the reins of power into his own hands, and thus protect Sir Richard Bingham against the consequences of his own cruelty and folly. The people of the north were equally oppressed and plun-

dered by those law officers of Elizabeth. Her sheriffs were here equally odious as in Connaught, and the whole system of English policy the subject of general execration. About this period, Hugh O'Nial, whose power was formidable to England, obtained from the Irish parliament the title of Earl of Tyrone ; he also succeeded in obtaining the inheritance of his ancestor, John O'Nial, by his personal application to the queen. The abilities and address of this celebrated Irishman are described by historians as of the first note. Mr Leland thus describes him : " Less respected in his sept, on account of the illegitimacy of his descent, he entered easily into the service of the English government, and in the rebellion of Desmond, was distinguished for his industry, activity, and valour. By an English education, and a constant intercourse with the state, he added the polish of English manners to a temper naturally insinuating and subtle ; but this refinement he could easily disguise among his own people, and assume all the port, and accommodate himself to all the barbarous manners of O'Nial. He succeeded in his interviews with Elizabeth, and made the most favourable impression on her mind ; she dismissed him with sentiments of the greatest confidence in his zeal and fidelity to her throne and interest. Every act of his life, from the period of his being vested with the title and inheritance of Tyrone, seems to have been auxiliary to the great scheme of asserting his independence against the usurpation of England. At the moment most confidence was reposed, he

was most securely laying the foundation of that power which became so truly formidable to the British interests. Surrounded as the Earl was by rival chieftains, and a wily administration, he has given no small proofs of great dexterity in his address, and great ingenuity in his designs."

About this period, (1587), Ireland was deprived of the kind and parental government of Sir John Perrot; and the same scenes of confusion and desolation which we have recorded, are about to be again visited on this ill-fated country, by the cruelty or the folly of his successor. The Irish followed their beloved governor in tears; and by the lamentations with which Sir John Perrot was accompanied, when giving up his administration, we may conceive that the people had a melancholy foreboding of the scenes which were to follow. Sir William Fitzwilliam succeeded to Sir John Perrot; and, as if it were the study of the English government to undo the wise and beneficent work of his predecessor, they took care to select that man whose vicious and corrupt propensities could best accomplish its wishes. Cruel, avaricious, and despotic, no mercy was great enough to impede the progress of his sword—no submission sufficiently passive to restrain the fury of his despotism. After the defeat of the celebrated armada, pompously stiled the invincible, seventeen ships belonging to this Quixotic expedition of the Spanish monarch were driven by a storm on the northern coasts of Ireland; they carried five thousand four hundred men—a formidable force, considering the then alienated state of the Irish, as

well as the colony. O'Ruarc, the chieftain of Breffney, hospitably received the enemy. He flattered himself that with such co-operation, another struggle might be made for the liberty of his country, and the safety of his religion. The Spanish commander, however, declined the overtures made to him by the Irish, and left his host and Ireland to the vengeance of an enraged English governor. O'Ruarc was conquered in the field, and being taken prisoner, was sent to London, where he was executed as a traitor. The avarice of Sir William Fitzwilliam was sharpened by the reports, that the Spanish vessels driven in to the north, carried large quantities of gold and silver ; he sent forward his emissaries to pursue their inquiries with fire and sword ; and enraged by the barrenness of his pursuit, he sacrificed Sir Owen O'Toole, and Sir John O'Doherty to his disappointed avarice. These two Irishmen were remarkable for the zeal of their loyalty, and the sincerity of their fidelity. Such wanton atrocity succeeded in obliterating the favourable impressions which the government of Sir John Perrot had made on the minds of the Irish ; he soon after ordered MacMahon, the head of one of the principal families in Monaghan, to be tried by a jury of private soldiers, for the violation of a law of which the accused was not aware, or before such law was established in the country : the pretext was sufficient when the reward was taken into consideration ; the estates of this devoted Irish chieftain were distributed among the followers of the deputy. The natural effect of such proceedings

was an universal abhorrence of every institution recommended by England; the distribution of English justice was, in the opinion of the Irish, the dissemination of ruin and desolation; the sheriffs were considered as executioners, and their boasted trial by jury was looked on as a mere plausible scheme by which their plans of barbarity might be perpetrated. The celebrated saying of Macguire, the chieftain of Fermanagh, demonstrates the feelings of horror with which the Irish contemplated the introduction of British law. When Fitzwilliam, the deputy, told Macguire that he intended to send a sheriff into his district, he answered with a simplicity and humour peculiar to his country—"Your sheriff shall be welcome; but let me know his eric, that if my people should cut off his head, I may levy it upon the country."—The protestant university of Dublin was founded about this period, and notwithstanding the miserable illiberality and narrowness of the principles on which it was established, has succeeded in giving to Ireland, and to the world, the greatest geniuses in every art and science.

The mind which even this partial patronage has brought forth, demonstrates the abundance of intellectual wealth with which Ireland is pregnant; and though we must ever consider the seminary in which Usher, Swift, Burke, Flood, Grattan, and Curran had graduated, as a blessing to our country, yet we cannot forget that Trinity college has also been the nurse of every prejudice, the slave of every despot, and the sycophantic tool of every

bad passion which has guided the helm of our country for the last two hundred years.

The artful minister of Elizabeth recommended this perennial fountain of hatred to the mere Irish, as the chief monument of her antipathy to the ancient religion of Irishmen; and under the fascinating robe of national education, she concealed the secret design of establishing an everlasting bank of national antipathy, on which England might draw without the possibility of exhaustion.

Trinity college was incorporated on the 29th day of December, 1591. It was to consist of a provost, three fellows, in the name of more, and three scholars in the name of more. Cecil, the great and artful minister of Elizabeth, was named in the charter first chancellor, and all future elections were vested in the provost and fellows; they were to hold their stations for seven years, and to be visited by the Archbishop of Dublin, Bishop of Meath, vice-treasurers, treasurer at war, chief justice, and mayor of Dublin. Mr Leland writes, that the institution had to struggle with the poverty of the kingdom, and the reluctance of the popish party: a most extraordinary circumstance, no doubt, when it is considered that the object of its foundation was the extinction of the Irish religion, and the subjugation of the Irish conscience. It was one of those expedients which fanaticism is perpetually furnishing to the passions of its votaries, in which we see the mild and universal tolerance of the Christian sacrificed to the idle and fruitless visions of the sectarian;—in which the human mind is forced to move, as in a magic circle, out of whose peri-

phery neither truth is to be heard, nor salvation to be obtained. Exclusive doctrines, which presumptuously pronounce on the everlasting doom of humanity, are no longer attended to by the reflecting or the merciful : every man is suffered, (without being exposed to the reproach of libertinism,) to follow the suggestions of his own conscience. The comprehensive principles of Christianity are preferred to the contracted feelings of religious monopoly, and a happy futurity is no longer denied to be the reward of every man who conscientiously follows the religion of his fathers.

It was about the year 1594, that O’Nial, the Earl of Tyrone, excited the suspicions of the English government, by his wily and inexplicable conduct ; at one time manifesting a spirit of dissatisfaction, at another co-operating with the viceroy in the establishment of English laws and English habits. On the death of Turlough O’Nial, the Earl of Tyrone assumed the high and important title of “ the O’Nial,” and seized and threw into prison the sons of John O’Nial, who were the only bars to his ambition. The government of Elizabeth in Ireland was unable to punish such violence, and was content to receive the well-dissembled homage of this artful Irish chieftain. The power of the English in Ireland, was now formidably threatened by the vigorous and rapid movements of O’Donnell in Fermanagh. The Earl of Tyrone, though so often successful in conciliating the confidence of the English, was suspected to be the principal source of all the calamities which now visited the colony.

Elizabeth became alarmed for her English sub-

jects in Ireland, and immediately sent forward one of her most experienced captains, Sir John Morris, at the head of three thousand veteran troops, to put down the formidable combination with which the Irish government was threatened. The Earl of Tyrone, on this occasion, put forth all the resources which an ingenious duplicity could suggest: secretly stirring up the most powerful Irish chieftains against the English, while he was professing the most passive submission, and courting, in the most earnest manner, the co-operation of the Spanish monarch, at the moment he was admitted to the confidence of Elizabeth's Irish government. We cannot suppose that any other consideration but the prudent apprehension of the formidable power of the Irish chieftains, could have induced the ministers of Elizabeth to advise her to soothe and conciliate an enemy whose guilt was so palpable, and whose violence was so flagrant. We therefore find commissioners appointed to treat with Tyrone and O'Donnell, and the redress of all grievances of which the Irish had to complain, set forth as the condition of their alliance and the price of their friendship; the full and free exercise of their religion, (the constant prayer of Ireland,) and that the part of the country possessed by the rebel chieftains, should be freed from the dreadful scourge of English garrisons and English sheriffs. Those terms were rejected, and the Irish flew to arms to assert their rights and privileges. Sir John Morris, a brave and humane soldier, marched against the enemy; but inexperienced in a species of war-

fare peculiar to Ireland, he was deprived of the opportunity of acquiring any considerable military fame. The soldiers whom he commanded, were unaccustomed to the air as well as food of Ireland; they were less patient of labour and distress, and little capable of bearing up against that perpetual harassing, to which they were exposed from the practice of retreating within the bogs and fortresses which covered the country. All those parts of Ulster, which are now scenes of the most improved agriculture, and the favoured seat of an enriching manufacture, was, at the period of which we are writing, covered with woods, deep and impenetrable to the English.

It is to this ignorance of the country, that we are to attribute the facility with which the English general was induced to treat with Tyrone and the Irish, who had now despaired of the promised relief from Spain. The power and menaces of the Spanish monarch occupied the entire mind of Elizabeth; and she was not displeased at any expedient that could, even for the moment, protect her against the embarrassment of an Irish war. Tyrone, experienced in all the arts of diplomacy, did not hesitate to subscribe to any conditions which might conciliate so powerful an enemy; he agreed, in the year 1596, to admit sheriffs into his country; he surrendered the title of O'Nial, confessed his correspondence with foreign powers, and almost agreed to become the vassal of an English viceroy. O'Donnell, O'Ruarc, and MacGuire made similar submissions.

The affairs of the north being thus settled, Sir John Morris proceeded to Connaught, the scene of the most wanton oppressions, by Sir Richard Bingham. The peculiar address with which Tyrone must have conducted himself to disarm the resentment of his enemies, after so many provocations, must compel the most partial historian to allow, that the talents of the Irish chieftain must have been of the first order. In answer to the charges of dissimulation and hypocrisy which Mr Leland brings against Tyrone, in all his communications with the English government, through servants of the colony, Mr Taaffe makes the following very just observations:—"Tyrone had two incompatible interests to manage; that of the northern Irish, who daily experienced such violent oppressions from government as seemed to announce a settled plan for their total extirpation, and that of the exterminating power, which though it chose to employ him, gave him abundant proof that it did not trust him, and meant to devour him, perhaps the last. In all his trials, (and he had severe ones), he acted with great judgment, and cool steady resolution, confounding his enemies, and bringing home conviction to the queen, her council, and her generals, by facts and arguments which they were unable to withstand. It has been said, he had great powers of persuasion; they must have been great indeed, were they able to deceive such understandings as the ministers of Elizabeth possessed: such minds as Bacon's, Cecil's, Walsingham's. If he possessed talents equal

to the conviction, or rather, to the fascination of such men as those, without truth or justice on his side, he must have been the most eloquent of orators. The fact is, he struggled to keep the peace of the north as long as it could be kept, without sacrificing his religion and the interests of the northerners, which would cause a general alienation of all hearts from him, and degrade him to a vile satellite of tyranny, despised even by those whom he served. It appears that Tyrone was able to baffle the exertions of Sir John Morris, whose unproductive campaigns now began to excite the dissatisfaction of his sovereign ; he was ordered to surrender the vice-regency of the colony to Lord Burgh, whose character fitted him for that desperate warfare which Ireland then exhibited. Sir John Morris, a man of the highest honour and most acute sensibility, fell a victim to the displeasure of Elizabeth, and is said to have died of a broken heart in the arms of his brother. We shall pass over the various subordinate efforts made by the colony to reduce the power of Tyrone, and proceed to that in which Tyrone succeeded in obtaining a signal triumph over his enemies. Tyrone determined to attack the fort of Blackwater ; this fort, being one of the most important depots of English strength in the north, was defended with as much spirit as it was assailed. The English and Irish armies, headed by two generals, not more remarkable for their valour and their prowess, than for the rancorous antipathy they entertained towards each other, seemed determined to decide the fate of Ireland

by a single battle. Marshal Bagnal commanded four thousand five hundred foot and five hundred horse, composed of those veterans who distinguished themselves in the campaigns of the continent; they were opposed to an Irish army nearly of equal numbers, animated by every stimulant that can inflame the human bosom. The onset of the Irish was furious and irresistible; the English army retired before the shock, and the marshal was one of the first who fell under the swords of the Irish. Victory almost immediately declared for Tyrone; fifteen hundred English fell on the field of battle; the slaughter of their principal officers was unexampled: Tyrone became master of all the artillery, and provisions and ammunition of the royal army, and the fort of Blackwater, the great object of his ambition, surrendered at discretion. Borlase, speaking of this victory, says, that “such a victory the Irish never gained since the English first set foot in Ireland.” Tyrone’s implacable enemy, Marshal Bagnal, with other principal officers, was slain. The brilliant triumph of the Irish under Tyrone, fanned the almost extinguished embers of insurrection in the western and southern counties of Ireland. The lords of Lixnaw, Fermoy, Mountgarrett, Cahir, united with the Irish against the English; and the Geraldines, who were distinguished by the popular titles of the *Knights of the Valley*, and the *White Knights*, joined the general confederacy for the restoration of Irish independence. The power of England never received so great a shock as at this period; and Elizabeth had suffer-

ed so much in her finances, and in her peace of mind, by the exasperating prolongation of the Irish war, that she would not, according to the English historian, have much regretted the total loss of such an incumbrance on her government. "The English council," Mr Hume writes, "were now sensible that the rebellion of Ireland was come to a dangerous head, and that the former temporizing acts of granting truce and pacification to the rebels, and of allowing them to purchase pardons by resigning part of the plunder acquired during their insurrection, served only to encourage the spirit of mutiny and disorder among them. Elizabeth, therefore, determined that a decided blow should be struck, and that a force should be sent into Ireland; which, from its magnitude, must command the reduction of the island." A tolerably correct idea may be formed of the resources of the Irish, by the extent of the force they were now to bring into the field against the English. The Earl of Essex, to whom Elizabeth was personally devoted, was selected to command the greatest expedition ever sent against Ireland; he was created Lord Lieutenant, and put at the head of twenty thousand men, with a power of pardoning all treasons, of removing officers, and conferring dignities; he might conduct the war as his discretion dictated, and was only responsible to Elizabeth, whose affections he commanded with unprecedented success. Tyrone and his companions in arms were undismayed by those gigantic preparations of Elizabeth: the flame of liberty spread through every corner of Ireland,

and the glory of making a great and unanimous struggle for their freedom animated every bosom at this most eventful crisis. The Earl of Essex was in a short time undeceived with respect to the resistance which the Irish were able to make ; he was opposed in every quarter ; harassed by indefatigable enemies, who were intimately informed in all the difficulties which the country possessed, and at length forced to acknowledge, that even the great force committed to his direction by Elizabeth, was inadequate to the reduction of so formidable a power as the Irish commanded. He complains that the great cement which held the Irish together was their inveterate antipathy to the reformed religion ; that the priests of their own persuasion so entirely possessed their confidence, that unless by fraud or by force something was done to reduce their power, England would have little chance of making a permanent conquest of Ireland. The enemies of Essex lost no time in exaggerating the disgrace of the British arms, and the vain-glorious boastings of their leader. The army of the latter was reduced so low as four thousand, when Tyrone, who expected a considerable supply of arms, money, and ammunition from Spain, proposed a parley to the English general. The circumstances in which Essex stood, forced him to embrace an offer which might be the means of retrieving his strength.— A truce for five weeks was agreed to, and the usual conditions which we see the Irish demanding after every struggle with England, of a free exercise of their religion, the restoration of their lands,

and an exemption from the English government, were agreed to by Essex as a reasonable ground of conciliation between the two powers. Such a treaty, with such an enemy as Tyrone, was a source of the bitterest mortification to the queen, who at this time began to suspect the designs of her favourite Essex. It is said she wrote to that general with her own hand, a letter of severe remonstrance, which stung him so poignantly, that he determined to repair immediately to her royal presence and confront his enemies. He left the government of Ireland to Sir George Carew and Chancellor Loftus. Elizabeth was dressing in her bed-chamber when Essex rushed in, covered with dust. All the fond recollections of former confidence returned, which succeeded in suspending the indignation her misfortunes in Ireland had created; but when reflection began to return, and pride re-assumed its place in the bosom of the queen, the bold and impetuous favourite was repelled with indignity, he was ordered to confine himself to his chamber, and after being examined before the council, he was committed to the custody of the lord keeper. The disgrace suffered by Essex was a sure source of triumph to the Irish leaders; and the co-operation of Spain soon after, who sent supplies of money and ammunition, elevated their hopes to the highest pinnacle, of re-establishing the ancient liberties of their country. Tyrone, or rather O'Nial, the title so dear to Irish vanity, declared himself the champion of the holy faith, and thus backed by every passion of the human bosom, determined to make one effort more against the common enemy.

The power of the colony was never more formidably assailed than at the momentous crisis when its defence was entrusted to a governor who was not heretofore distinguished, either in the field or in the cabinet. Charles Blunt, Lord Mountjoy, was appointed deputy of Ireland, with full power to act in this country in such a manner as his own judgment should best direct. A man of studious and secluded habits, little of enterprize was expected from his administration. He started from his study into the field, no doubt with an improved and highly cultivated understanding : and the results of his administration demonstrated, that it did not require years of practical experience to make a man of his capacity an efficient and successful officer. Under his administration, the power of the Irish received the most fatal blow ; under him, the Irish spirit was first obliged to bend to the overwhelming combination of force and fraud ; under him, England most successfully practised her schemes of division among the rival chieftains of Ireland ; he prosecuted the war against the Irish with an unprecedented vigour ; and the fame of O'Nial, which rendered the Irish so formidable an enemy, sunk before the ascendant fortune of Mountjoy. The various septs seceded from the standard of O'Nial, who was beaten in almost every effort to recover his military reputation. Mountjoy introduced a new system of warfare, which distressed the Irish much more than their accustomed pitched battles with the English ; he desolated the country, and thus deprived the Irish of the necessaries of life. Famine was judged by

him his most powerful ally ; and the fields of Ireland, which once exhibited the fruits of industry, were laid waste by the un pitying sword of an English army. To these evils were added the destructive plan of circulating a base currency through Ireland, by which the rival chieftains might be deprived of the means of procuring supplies from foreign countries. This plan, though it had the effect of multiplying the distresses of the Irish, recoiled on its authors ; for the army of the English were almost beggared, and their spirit almost conquered by the reflection, that the reward of all their toils was to be the possession of a depreciated and debased currency. " The hearts of the queen's soldiers," says Morrison, " failed herewith, for they served in discomfort, and came home beggars ; so that only the treasurers and pay-masters, who were thereby infinitely enriched, had cause to bless the authors of the invention." The murmurs of the soldiers were so great, that Mountjoy determined to give them all the occupation he could ; and with this view he portioned them into small divisions, and proceeded to the north against O'Nial, where he received the submission of many of the allies of this fallen chieftain.

The south of Ireland now presented a scene of formidable hostility, and Sir George Carew was instructed to lead his forces into that part of the country where the Irish strength appeared to be most advantageously posted. The people of the south had long complained of the oppression under which they suffered, the extortions of the English

sheriffs, the legal murders which were constantly perpetrating, on the base diabolical speculation of confiscating their properties, and the cruel and remorseless execution of the penal laws. The Irish historians of those days vindicate the resistance of their countrymen to the proselytizing spirit of Elizabeth, to which they attribute all the calamities under which Ireland now suffered. To the successful practice of intrigue and corruption, the Irish chieftains of the greatest influence were found to give their countenance: the rivalry of faction, the hatred of families, the jealousy of those little powers into which the Irish were divided, were so many instruments in the hands of Sir George Carew, to effect the subjugation of all. We therefore find the houses of MacArthy, in Munster, exhausting themselves in those destructive contests which left their country exposed to the common enemy. At the time Sir George Carew proceeded against Munster, the Irish had in a great measure settled all their domestic feuds, and from the apprehension of the common danger, joined against the invader of their territories; but their numbers, however formidable, being commanded by separate and independent leaders, jealous of each other, and restrained by no superior authority, could never be able to cope with the English army, under a leader of decision and of talent, to whom all those he commanded looked up with common reverence, and among whom the spirit of faction and division could never enter. Against such an enemy as the Irish, the weapons of corruption are more formid-

able than the sword or the bayonet : the one would succeed in dividing and weakening, the other in uniting and strengthening. Sir George Carew therefore employed the artillery of jealousies and suspicions among the Irish, and succeeded in making the Irish chieftain the instrument of his own degradation. He stooped to the meanest artifices to entrap the Irish ; he would bribe the sister to betray the brother, as in the case of the sister of the Earl of Desmond, who was married to Dermot O'Connor ; and the servant to assassinate his master, as in the case of the servant of the said earl, who confessed at the place of execution, that he was bribed by Sir George Carew to perform so honourable a duty. Such were the practices by which he endeavoured to effect the humiliation of the Irish. When he drew his sword, the country through which he passed was marked with desolation ; a divided people fled before the misery of famine ; and the principal strong-hold of the south fell into the hands of Sir George Carew, by which he completed its conquest. Peace was restored ; the peace of annihilation was established ; and the Irish only then began to reflect on the folly of those jealousies which exposed them to the fury and the avarice of the common enemy.

The arms of Mountjoy and Sir George Carew had almost extinguished the spirit of insurrection, when the reports of a new supply from Spain, of men, arms, and money, circulated through every corner of the kingdom. For a length of time the rumour was discredited ; it was supposed that the

advice of O'Nial's reverse of fortune might have reached the court of Spain, and prevented the effort which, in the days of victory, might have secured the freedom of Ireland. The Spaniards succeeded in effecting a landing at Kinsale in 1601, and as it generally happens in all such cases, the hopes of the invaders were considerably damped by the unflattering prospect which the country now presented of an active and efficient co-operation on the part of the Irish. O'Nial and O'Donnell, the one at the head of a considerable force from Connaught and Leinster, the other with the flower of the Ulster forces, marched to the assistance of their foreign friends, who were then besieged at Kinsale by Sir George Carew. The poor people of Ireland were once more animated with the hope of being able to recover their liberty and to preserve their religion; the clergy, whom Mr Leland so often represents as the bigotted fermenters of sedition, yielded to those feelings by which every honest Irish mind was impelled, and stimulated their oppressed and persecuted countrymen to a vigorous resistance of that power which had inflicted such unprecedented suffering throughout the land. The colony, on the other hand, put forth all their strength; and the English government lost no time in sending forward a large force to co-operate with the Lord Deputy. The Spaniards received a reinforcement, and all the disaffected septs of Ireland conceived that the hour of their deliverance from England had at length arrived. The exertion was universal, and the English army seemed threat-

ened with immediate annihilation, when they are rescued by the temerity and precipitancy of the Spanish commander. The English had laid siege to Cork, and, pressed by the army of O'Nial in their rear, they were nearly starved into submission, when the Spanish commander insisted that O'Nial should no longer delay attacking the English in their camp, who were diminished in numbers, and exhausted in spirit : the fatal order was obeyed, contrary to the advice of O'Nial, and the Irish army, after a furious conflict, was disgracefully routed. The various forces of which the Irish army was composed, retired to their respective provinces ; and O'Nial and O'Donnell, stung with disappointment and vexation, from that day gave up the cause for which they had endured so much toil, and incurred so much danger.

The Spanish general, Don Juan, under the impression that the Irish had betrayed their country as well as their allies, immediately proposed a truce with Mountjoy, which, after some conferences, was granted. Mr Leland has written a speech for the Spanish general, which is not more disgraceful to the head than to the heart of the Spaniard ; he makes him upbraid the Irish, who must have been so interested in the success of his enterprise, with treachery, weakness, and cowardice ; and he represents the officer of a gallant and generous nation indulging in all the wretched effusions of pride, disappointment, and malice. We cannot subscribe to those relations, so inconsistent with the dictates of common sense, or the obvious suggestions of those circumstances un-

der which the Spaniards then acted in Ireland ; but we cannot close our eyes against the object of that historian, who, in every page of his history, struggles to obscure the character of a people who so long made a glorious resistance to the greatest despotism in Europe. After the failure of this last effort, O'Nial considered all further struggles as increasing the calamities of his country : we therefore find him submitting to the humiliating conditions of Mountjoy ; and almost at the moment the inveterate oppressor of his country, Elizabeth, was sinking into the tomb, O'Nial and his gallant companions were obliged to bow to the superior fortune of her arms. A tolerably correct opinion may be formed of the calamities endured by the Irish nation,*

* Mr Hume, whenever he writes of Ireland, indulges in all that high and swelling tone of national ascendancy, which the conqueror always assumes, when speaking of a fallen nation ; he takes but little pains in ascertaining the truth of his opinions, but suffers himself to be carried down the current of public rumour, which represented the Irish as a wild and barbarous nation. The volume of Bede, in which Mr Hume might have read of the ancient fame of Ireland, was open to him in vain ; the testimony of Alfred to the learning of Ireland, was for him recorded in vain. The integrity with which the poor people of Ireland clung to their ancient religion was, in the opinion of Mr Hume, an additional evidence of her barbarism ; and the virtues which should raise the Irish people in the estimation of every mind of sensibility and honour, are the proofs of that incorrigible spirit of resistance to the promulgation of those laws, and the rationality of that religion, which England so piously laboured to disseminate by fire and sword. " Even at the end of the sixteenth century," writes Mr Hume, " when every Christian nation was cultivating with ardour every civil art of life, that island, lying in a temperate climate, enjoying a fertile soil, accessible in its

during this remorseless struggle for her complete subjugation, by a view of the extraordinary prices

situation, possessed of innumerable harbours, was still, notwithstanding these advantages, inhabited by a people, whose customs and manners approached nearer those of savages, than of barbarians." Mr Hume has these observations on Ireland in his reign of Elizabeth; but in the reign of Henry VIII. the same historian seems to have forgotten, that he has most philosophically accounted for the barbarity which he so unfeelingly charges upon that country. Speaking of the cruelty and folly with which Ireland was treated by England, he says, that, "thrown out of the protection of justice, the natives could find no security but in force; and flying the neighbourhood of cities, which they could not approach with safety, they sheltered themselves within marshes and forests from the insolence of their unknown masters; being treated like wild beasts, they became such; and joining the ardour of revenge to their yet untamed barbarity, they grew every day more intractable and more dangerous." These were the reasons why Ireland, in the sixteenth century, presented such a scene of ruin, and desolation, and barbarity; and they were bad reasons for upbraiding a nation which had been distinguished in Europe as a principal asylum of the arts and sciences. The ancient prosperity of Irish agriculture is well attested by the most respectable authorities, and the researches of the learned of modern days furnish us with proofs that even the mountains of Ireland were once the seats of wealth, population and refinement.

Molyneux, in a letter to the Archbishop of Dublin, thus writes: "Ireland has certainly been better inhabited formerly, than it is at present. Mountains that are now covered with bogs, have been formerly ploughed, for where you dig five or six feet deep, you discern a proper soil for vegetation, and find it ploughed into ridges and furrows. This is observable in the wild mountains between Armagh and Dundalk, and likewise on the mountains of Altimore; the same, as I am informed, has been observed in the counties of Derry and Donegal. A plough was found in a very deep bog in the latter, and an hedge with wattles standing under a bog that was five or six feet in depth. I have seen likewise large old oaks grow on land that had the remains of furrows and

of every necessary of life. If the Irishman was able to console himself with the reflection, that the

ridges, and I am told that on the top of a high mountain in the north there are yet remaining the streets, and other marks of a large town; and in truth there are few places, but either at present, or when the bog is removed, exhibit marks of the plough, which must surely have proved the country formerly to be well inhabited."

Morrison, from whom Mr Leland takes the burthen of his relation during the reign of Elizabeth, and who accompanied Mountjoy during the ferocious progress of that deputy's arms through Ireland, bears testimony to the prosperous state of the Irish agriculture, even in the sixteenth century. "I was surprised," he writes, "at the beauty and fertility of O'Moore's country, and the neat manner in which it was laid out for tillage." Giraldus Cambrensis, one of the most malignant and prejudiced writers of Irish misfortune, gives the following picture of Ireland: "The plains are fertile in corn, the mountains are covered with flocks, the woods abound with game:" also, "This island is rich in pasture and agriculture, in milk, in honey, and in wines, though not of its own growth. Stanihurst says, that Ireland was known to be rich in mines of different metals. Donatus, bishop of Fesul, near Florence, who wrote eleven centuries back, affirmed, that Ireland abounded with gems, cloth and gold; the great plenty of gold is attested by the quantity of plate used by the sovereigns of Tara, and in churches throughout the kingdom. The lofty golden goblets, which distinguished the ancient Irish feasts, are an evidence of the luxury of private families. With respect to the ancient commerce of Ireland, Tacitus, in his life of Agricola, affirms that the harbours of Ireland were more frequented by foreign merchants than Britain, and that Ireland connected the most powerful provinces of the empire, by a great commercial intercourse." Notwithstanding the denunciation of Mr Hume against the civilization of ancient Ireland, we must totally reject historical evidence, or admit that Ireland was the mart of civilization and science for the west of Europe. Her hospitality and learning are extolled by all the writers of the middle ages; from all parts of Europe, its youth flocked hither in

last act of Ireland's suffering closed with the life of Elizabeth, and that its devoted inhabitants were hereafter to enjoy the blessings of protection and tranquillity; the blood which had been shed in the defence of this licentious liberty, enjoyed by the various septs into which Irishmen were divided, and by which they were so often distracted and convulsed, would not be considered a dear purchase for the establishment of legitimate government, and the impartial dispensation of justice. The most ardent lover of Irish freedom might not have lamented the overthrow of a system which contained in its principles such fruitful seed of anarchy and weakness; and the introduction of English laws and customs would have been received by the patriot and the philosopher as the healer of those wounds with which the fugitive and cowardly wars of nearly five centuries had disfigured

crowds, and Irish professors laid the first foundation of seminaries and universities abroad.

The ancient state of Irish learning, so flattering to the pride of an Irishman, is proved beyond the possibility of controversy. There is not a fact in history which may not be disputed, if we hesitate to give credit to the testimonies in favour of our ancient literature. Bede, Usher, Camden, abound with evidence in support of the ancient literary fame of Ireland. Camden, speaking of Sulgenus, who flourished in the tenth century, thus writes; "He was sent into Ireland for his education; he went hither to court the muses in a land far famed for admirable wisdom; and our English ancestors appear to have borrowed thence their alphabet, as they formerly used the same which is employed to this day in Ireland; so that Ireland was adorned with the splendour of genius in those ages, when the rest of the christian world lay immured in darkness."

his country. The scenes which are to follow afford no such consolation to the afflicted reader; the cruelty of the sword only gives way to the more torturing cruelty of the law; and the ambition of the soldier, which so often threw a ray of glory over the most dreadful catastrophe, is hereafter to be succeeded by the creeping and insidious artifice of the legal trader on the feelings and the miseries of Irishmen. Elizabeth succeeded in breaking down the hitherto untameable spirit of Ireland; and prosecuted the war against a brave and conscientious nation, with a fear and barbarity almost unexampled in the annals of history.

By an unrelenting system of oppression and violence she overturned a power which had existed for three thousand years; a power which sometimes greatly struggled with difficulties, was often distinguished by its splendour, its glory, and its intrinsic benefit to mankind; renowned for its sanctity, its learning, hospitality, charity, valour and honour. This country, which an insatiable thirst of dominion and avarice laid waste with such unpitied desolation, had once the merit of diffusing through the nations of Europe religion, learning, and the arts; a proud and consoling fact, to which the high and undisputed authority of Bede, Alfred and Camden, bear a willing and ingenuous testimony.



